

# The Icelandic Canadian

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## Christmas Memory

By HÓLMFRÍÐUR DANIELSON

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*The snow lies deeply drifted  
Against our humble home.  
The stately pines in ermine cloaked,  
Point to a stately dome  
Studded with gold and silver,  
And glittering diamonds too;  
A filigree of filmy lace  
Trailing across the blue.*

*The many chores of day are done,  
And mellow candle-light  
Mingles with soft grey shadows  
To charm away the night.*

*The curtains white, the polished boards,  
Infused with life and soul;  
While love is mirrored merrily  
In shining plate and bowl.  
Small, eager hands have decked the tree  
With garlands and with gold, —  
The gold of mystery and dreams  
Which Christmas would unfold.*

*Then Father tiptoes to the tree  
With presents, — just a few;  
And Mother's eyes like jewels shine,  
Set round with sparkling dew.*

*A hush has fallen all around  
On woods and plain and hill,  
A breathless and expectant hush  
While all the world is still.  
A hymn is sung, a prayer breathed, —  
The Hallowed hour is near,\*  
That tender childhood hour of faith, —  
Christmas Eve is here!*

\* In Iceland and among the Icelandic pioneers in this country the observance of Christmas began at six o'clock on Christmas Eve.

## *A Home For Nordic Culture In The West*

### EDITORIAL

That which has inherent worth is of timeless value. It may be spiritual such as religious beliefs, Christianity itself, which, as Dean Inge says "is not a religion but religion in its most universal and deepest significance". It may be a conception or principle of life such as democracy, unchanging in its essentials but beautifully variant in its outward forms. Or it may be a culture, rooted in the past, yet of the present, a culture retained in a language and a literature which are the living embodiments of that culture.

Man wants to guard whatever is precious and dear to him and is willing to make sacrifices for it. It may be his own or it may be something which he has in common with others. If of the latter type he may join with them in asking for sacrifices to preserve it. In that case, however, two essential requirements should be present: its inherent value and the permanence of the form in which it is to be retained or the institution in which it is to be housed. If so then the battle of the day for its preservation has little meaning. Being of enduring value it is as the seed in the ground which may lie dormant only to sprout as it feels the rays of the spring sun. It may flourish, wither away, but phoenix like rise up again.



Nordic culture, which now may be called Icelandic culture, as it is in Iceland and only there where it has been preserved and nurtured, is in that third category. Its inherent value is beyond dispute; the permanence of its abode in its island home is assured and need cause no fears. Can a home for it be found in the West?

Icelandic culture was brought over in the hearts and the minds of the thousands of immigrants from Iceland who settled in America. It has temporarily

been retained through the spoken language in the home and the church, in the reading of newspapers, modern literature and the sagas. Aside from these more outward and hence more vulnerable forms, a feeling of loyalty, a pride of birth and a sense of real values have been transmitted to children and children's children, so strong, that no outside influences have as yet appreciably disturbed them. Will that endure or is it necessary to find a permanent home for Icelandic culture from which those very qualities of heart and mind will perpetually draw strength and vitality.

Viewed in retrospect, the cold, cruel facts, if you will, appear ominous. A mere seventy years, the allotted life span of a human being, the years from 1875 to 1945 tell the story. In 1875 a colony on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, more a colony of Iceland than of Canada, with a form of local administration all its own, every word spoken in Icelandic, thoughts based upon experiences in Iceland, every hope born in a Nordic bosom; in 1945, English the language of the street and in most of the homes, services in the "Icelandic churches" half in English, half in Icelandic, the language of every organization, save one, almost entirely in English, over eighty per cent of the marriages "mixed". The conclusion is inescapable: a home has to be found for Icelandic culture — a home that will endure and not suffer through the ravages of time or the inexorable consequences of place and circumstance.

The only permanent home in the West for Icelandic culture is a Chair in Icelandic language, history and literature at the university in the province where the largest number of people of Icelandic extraction reside.



Hope for the establishment of such

a chair is not new. In fact discussions were initiated about the obvious need of doing something in that direction as soon as "Vestur Íslendingar" got their cultural bearings here. The writer first heard it discussed when he entered Wesley College in the fall of 1905.

The past reveals successes that are encouraging, failures that are disappointing.

The most marked success was the establishment of a professorship in Icelandic at Wesley College, now United College. The man selected, the late Rev. Fridrik J. Bergmann, combined a spiritual and cultural leadership with a masterly command of the language he taught. He attracted students from the Icelandic settlements far and near, was to them not only an instructor in Icelandic but an advisor and a source of inspiration. "Non scholae sed vitae discimus"; we do not learn for a school, but for life. Those who received instruction from Rev. Bergmann became so enthusiastic about what was being transmitted, or rather what was being brought out in themselves, that it became a vital influencing force for the rest of their lives. After that, mastery of language and the niceties of grammar and syntax became of very secondary importance.

Eventually the teaching of Icelandic at the college and indeed at the university was dropped. True, Icelandic is still on the university curriculum, but for all practical purposes it has disappeared. Nothing is gained now in pointing out that this was a retrograde step and one to be deplored. We must accept facts as they are.

Later the Jón Bjarnason Academy was established. Opinion was divided as to the wisdom of the move. Some clung to the existing scheme of things and wanted the teaching of Icelandic continued at Wesley College. By that time the university proper was in its initial stages of expansion. Faint voices were heard suggesting that there be a Chair in Nordic languages at the university.

The Jón Bjarnason Academy flourished for a number of years and then disappeared. Excellent work was done but the fact remains that it is no more. No useful purpose is served in setting forth arguments for or against the teaching of Icelandic in institutions on the High School level, or in attempting to analyze the causes of the ultimate collapse of the Jón Bjarnason Academy.

In the spring of 1932 Dr. Sigurður Nordal visited Winnipeg. Through his scholarship and learning, based upon extensive studies at home and abroad, his strong and engaging personality, his qualities of mind which can best be described in the Icelandic words "drengur góður", Dr. Nordal captivated all with whom he came in contact. In everything he said and urged one could feel what was closest to his heart — *íslensk menning og varðveisla hennar* — the old Norse conception of life and its preservation in the Icelandic language and in the sagas and modern literature — in short the Icelandic way of life.

The response to his plea was immediate and startling. It is doubtful whether at any time, before or after, opinion has been so unanimous behind the project as at the time Dr. Nordal was here. A movement was started of an exploratory nature to ascertain ways and means of raising the money required to place the proposed department on a sound financial basis.

This movement was given a certain amount of publicity and received general support. Wills were made in which bequests to the proposed chair were included. One of those who made such a will died in 1937 and a gift became available of three thousand dollars, less succession duties of a little over five hundred dollars. Other wills of a similar nature have been made. Some recent events have revealed to what an amazing extent plans for attaining the desired objective began to crystallize shortly after Dr. Nordal was here.

Centuries after the event, Lord Byron cried for three to make another Thermopylae to restore Greece to its ancient

splendor. May we be granted but one — Dr. Nordal himself, or someone else who can once more inspire us and create the driving force necessary to accomplish what has been a cherished hope for so many years.

At the time this exploratory movement was under way a suggestion was made which to the writer's mind, is one of the most constructive to emerge during the two score years of discussion of this project. The suggestion was that a number of Icelanders should each undertake to contribute the sum of one hundred dollars a year for ten successive years. Exemptions from present heavy income taxes have added strength to arguments supporting this method of obtaining donations. There, of course, is no reason why such a plan could not be carried out in conjunction with other methods such as large immediate subscriptions. The time might well be reduced to five years.

The movement which started in 1932 failed. Again nothing is gained in enumerating the reasons for its failure.

In 1944 the second contribution to the fund was made — the only one already handed over to the university authorities. It was in the sum of five thousand dollars. And in the summer of 1945 an announcement was made that the magni-

animous sum of fifty thousand dollars had been placed in trust towards the establishment of the chair, to become available on conditions related, no doubt, to reasonable prospects, through donations and public support, that the undertaking would succeed.



Such are the successes and the failures up to the present time. The original objective was one hundred thousand dollars. With the lowering of interest rates and the value of the dollar that amount will probably have to be doubled. A good start has been made but there has to be a united effort if the objective is to be reached.

The failures and the delays of the past have been disappointing and discouraging. They need not be a deterrent but should rather be an urge to more concerted effort.

There are two things we must never forget: that which we seek to preserve is of timeless value; the abode in which we seek to house it will endure. For that reason delays and temporary setbacks are but of the moment.

A home for Icelandic culture must be erected in the West.

W. J. Lindal

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## *The Memorial Day Service*

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It is very fitting and appropriate that on Memorial Day, November 11, a service should be held at which we can let our minds wander back to The Fallen of the two world wars and the sacrifices they made for us.

The Jón Sigurðson Chapter of the I. O. D. E. has for many years sponsored such a service. This year it was held in the First Lutheran Church and as on previous occasions the formal parts of the service were conducted by the ministers of the two churches, Rev. V. J.

Eylands and Rev. Philip Pétursson. Music was supplied by a joint choir from the two congregations. Solos were sung by Kerr Wilson.

On this occasion the man selected to deliver the address of Tribute to the Fallen was Major N. S. Bergman, who only recently returned from overseas where he had served with some of those to whom he was paying the tribute.

Norman very appropriately pointed out that on such an occasion we must not let our thoughts fill us with a feel-



ing of sadness. It is better that we use his own words and quote from his address which was delivered with due solemnity and in its appeal once more brought home to us the duty we owe to them, to their ideals — to our ideals which we now have a chance to guard and preserve.

"Once we ease our sadness, we are better able to analyse our tribute and in so doing ask ourselves the question, 'To what are we paying tribute?' We are paying tribute to the men and women who in two World Wars gave their lives for an ideal. The very nature of their sacrifice meant that they could not see that ideal attained. The very nature of our tribute must be a dedication of ourselves to the attainment of that ideal. Until that ideal is an accomplished fact we cannot say they didn't die in vain. They fought for peace and through peace they sought for our full freedom. Until the ideal for which they fought so bravely becomes a reality, they cannot rest in peace. Our duty to their memory is plain for all to see. We must keep faith with them. . . .

"The simplicity of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster Abbey is almost awe-inspiring. But to fully appreciate the security of that soldier's sleep one must look to the left. There one sees the freshness of new structure. A few years ago you could see the rubble of a bomb blast where, during the Battle of Britain, an aerial hit was scored. Not far from there stand the Houses of Parliament where the Commons Chamber was destroyed and must be rebuilt. All buildings in the area show some signs of bomb damage, but the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier still stands untouched. May there not be divine deflection of the bombers' aim?

"With these facts to reassure us that our fallen friends will rest in peace wherever they may lie, what then remains for us to do? We must ensure that, so far as it lies within our power, we, the living, will complete the task in

which our friends so bravely died. They fought for peace and in that peace they hoped that we would obtain full freedom. . . .

"The guns are silent, but peace has not yet come. In order that our efforts may be placed in proper channels we must realize that our country, through this last war, has attained full national status in the councils of the world and we, as her citizens, have come of age. Our international responsibilities have widened in this confused and restless world. We cannot discard the mantle of responsibility we now wear as Canadian citizens. Our fallen friends wore it in the part they played in world events. Throughout their work they were ever mindful of their racial origin and their own religious teaching, but they were Canadians first and foremost. You and I are the beneficiaries of their policy of accepting the responsibilities of full Canadian citizenship. They had no room in their short lives for petty provincialism or sectionalism. That is an evil of peace. . . .

"The words we speak tonight will not be long remembered, but the task which lies within our power to help complete will live forever in the chronicles of time, if we see it through to fulfilment. So let us all go forward together, united in a common cause, determined, as we watch the plot unfold in the drama on the stage of world events, to play our proper role as destiny may direct or opportunity avail. The smoke of battle has cleared away and, in the distance, we can see our goal. As we strive onward let us never forget that ideal for which we seek

"The tumult and the shouting dies —  
The captains and the kings depart  
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,  
A humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget! " "

W. J. L.

## *Handicrafts of Iceland*

By SOFIA WATHNE

A question frequently asked is "What are the handicrafts of Iceland?" As far as the writer has been able to discover the handicrafts of the people of Iceland are those of the Scandinavian peoples, and they come by them quite honestly.

As the history of Iceland is recorded from its very beginning in the ancient Icelandic Sagas, we are well informed on everything pertaining to the settlement of the island.

Thus we know, that prior to the arrival of the Norsemen in the late 9th century, the only people living on the island were a few Irish monks who had taken up their abode there presumably because they shared with one of our famous film stars, the desire "to be alone". With the exception of these hermits who left almost at once; Iceland was entirely uninhabited, and no evidence of prehistoric people, of strange creeds or crafts has ever been found.

The first settlers to arrive came from Norway. They were chieftains and nobles who had chosen to leave their native land with their families, livestock and other possessions rather than to bow to autocratic rule. They were joined in Iceland by other high ranking families of Norse descent who came from Ireland, the Western Islands and the islands north of Scotland.

Judged by the standards of the times, these people were cultured and highly civilized. That they were skilled craftsmen and had brought with them adequate equipment, is shown by the fact that one of their chief exports was *vaðmál*, this woolen cloth was also recognized legal tender.

According to history the Norsemen



Weaving display from a recent crafts exhibit held at Laugaland School of Home Economics, Iceland.

adhered with great fidelity to the ways of their ancestors and had brought to the new country everything necessary to their way of life. Some of the more wealthy settlers imported timber and built pretentious dwellings with separate banquet halls where guests were lavishly entertained. We are told that on festive occasions tables were decked with white linen tablecloths and that fingerbowls and towels were also used. Linen towels and tablecloths indicate a knowledge of the spinning and weaving of flax.

Costly gold brocaded garments and mantles of scarlet and other striking colors worn by ladies and gentlemen of rank at these social functions are described in the Sagas, and it was customary to deck the halls with wall hangings and draperies. From this we know that picture weaving, embroidery and dyeing were highly developed arts. Not all of this finery was imported. Some of it may have been purchased abroad, — ships of the ancient Vikings made frequent visits to foreign ports and they traded everywhere — but much of it was doubtless made at home by the ladies of the aristocracy who spent their leisure

hours weaving tapestries and embroidering in the manner of other European ladies of rank.

Although historians give detailed accounts of life in Iceland in ancient days, they tell little of crafts, but the poets, bless their beauty loving souls, have left us some very valuable information. A poem dealing with the period from 850 to 1050 A.D., describes spinning and weaving, garment making and hemming as well as embroidered cloths of fine flax linen. Another ancient poem describes a high born lady weaving a tapestry picturing summer scenes and swans, gay scenes of court life, stately ships with carved prows and lastly, scenes of warriors brave in battle.

Though less graphic, the information provided by prose writers is of value too. We learn from them that ladies of the Viking Age, not content to work entirely with wool and linen, also used thread of silver and gold, which was brought to them from the Orient by their seafaring men. In one of the sagas a robe ornamented with silver is presented as a gift. Other references of this kind indicate that patterns enriched with gold and silver were not unusual.

If the motifs used in Icelandic designs are not entirely Norse in character, we must remember that at the time of the settlement of Iceland, Celtic art was at its height, and greatly affected Norse culture. The dragon, for instance, is thought to be of Celtic origin and other motifs may have come from the same source. After all, the ladies who came to Iceland from Ireland and the Western Islands were no less expert with needle and shuttle than were the ladies from Norway, and their Celtic designs cannot fail to have influenced later art.

The custom of decking walls with decorative drapes on festive occasions was observed for centuries. When, after the acceptance of Christianity, the churches adopted this custom too, the arts of embroidery and picture weaving were taken up by the cloisters and convents.

Now you may wonder why we have

not any existing examples of these earliest arts, but this is due to the fact that fabrics are very perishable. It is only in countries where the climate is dry and soil conditions are favorable to their preservation that any ancient examples of woven fabrics or embroideries have been found. In the Scandinavian countries, where the climate is damp and soil conditions are most unfavorable, finds of any antiquity are rare; the most remarkable being the tomb that was discovered at Oseberg, Norway, in 1904, which yielded among other things, loom weights, weaving swords, spindle whorls and flax carders as well as woven fabrics. While the fabrics were practically destroyed with age, the implements supplied valuable information. They revealed that the Scandinavian people had used the vertical warp-weighted looms as did other countries of Europe, and that flax as well as wool had been spun and woven.

As the approximate date of this tomb is given as 800 A.D., and the settlement of Iceland began in 874, it is safe to assume that the implements and methods used by the early settlers in Iceland were very similar to those indicated by the contents of the tomb.

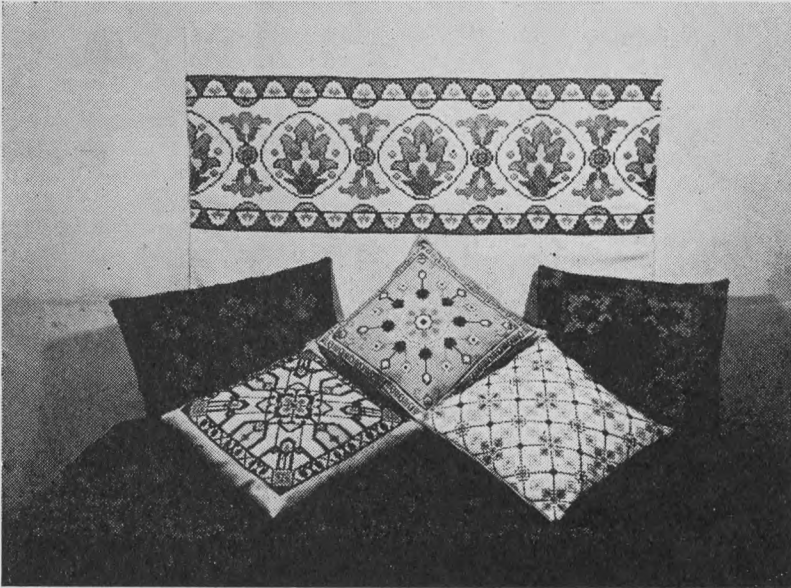
References in ancient writings support this theory and a recent discovery of loom-weights in a 13th century farmstead in Iceland provides still further proof.

The warp-weighted loom is of very ancient origin antedating recorded history by thousands of years. It is found in ancient Egyptian tomb-paintings and on early Greek vase decorations. Weights have been found amid ruins of greatest antiquity, the Swiss Lake Dwellings, for instance, yielded loom weights by the score. These looms underwent little change throughout the ages and were used in Europe and the flax growing countries until the 12th and 13th centuries. They remained in use in Iceland up to the close of the 18th century and even longer. One, it is said, was in use as late as 1860.

Weaving on these looms was slow and tedious and entailed endless walking, the weaver having to make two trips around the loom for each insertion of weft. It is reckoned that a good weaver walked a **þingmannaleið** (which is about 23 English miles), in a day's weaving.

When we consider that **vaðmál** was recognized legal tender and was for centuries one of the countries chief exports, we begin to realize what a prodigious amount of work must have been

possessed some excellent silversmiths and other metal workers as well as skilled carvers. Designs are very similar to those of other Scandinavian countries of the same period. They are exceedingly elaborate and are characterized by intricate interlacing of bands as well as serpents, dragons and animals. Much of the costume jewellery is of bronze and copper, some of which appears to have been gilded and embellished with silver, but the precious metals



Patterns from the New Book of Embroidery by Arndís Björnsdóttir and Ragnheiður O. Björnsson. Only Icelandic fabric and Icelandic wool is used. Colors are mostly vegetable dyes.

done by the weavers of Iceland in those early days. For it must not be forgotten that with the exception of the finery which was imported by the higher classes, every inch of fabric for clothing, napery and other home uses, had to be woven on these looms, in addition to the **vaðmál** which was woven for trade and export.

Although museums lack examples of ancient textile art, they have some fine examples of metal work and carvings from the earliest period. References in ancient writings indicate that Iceland

have not withstood the ravages of time as have the baser metals. Enough remains however, to indicate their original appearance. The brooches or clasps are very large. Some from the 9th and 10th centuries are as much as four inches in diameter.

The next period in the history of Iceland is dark and dreary. From the early 13th to the late 18th century, the people were sorely tried. Internal conflict, foreign domination and trade monopolies resulted in steadily growing poverty



with plagues, famine and disease adding to the general distress.

Arts and crafts do not appear to have suffered as did other cultural pursuits, for many beautiful examples of carving and metal work of this period are to be found in museums and art collections. Among them is a chalice from the church at Grund. Beautifully proportioned and exquisitely designed, it is thought to be early 13th century work. It is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England.

Existing examples of textile art consist of a few church hangings, altar cloths and frontals, the oldest of which date back to the 15th and 16th centuries. All are embroidered with biblical scenes, figures of saints and sacred inscriptions. They are similar in style and feeling to contemporary European work.

While these examples are very valuable to the student of crafts, they show only one phase of the work that was done, here again, poetry comes to the rescue, and that, so thoroughly that a whole volume on the subject could not be more enlightening. This very informative poem is written to a young girl in the 17th century, and proves that a great deal was expected of young ladies in the way of home arts.

A literal translation without any attempt at rhyme will serve to give an idea of what these arts were.

"I ask that you learn the finest home arts that a young lady should know. Sit on a cushion with a needle bright as silver held in nimble fingers sewing fine seams,

Hemming snowy linens, fashioning garments and fancy collars, setting up patterns in looms, weaving saddlecloths, cushions and coverlets, ribbons and cardwoven bands.

Cutwork outlined in Irish embroidery, drawn work and decorative hems. Long drapes and panels in palest colors ornamented in wondrous and varied hues.

Crossstitch and needlepoint, eyestitch and gobelin, cloister and satin stitch too.

The preparing of wool and the art of knitting.

The tinting of snowy fleeces with artfully blended dyes."

According to this poem, young ladies were expected to learn practically all the embroidery stitches, and in addition dressmaking, setting up a loom, plain and fancy weaving, card and braid weaving, dyeing, carding and spinning as well as knitting.

The poet could hardly have enumerated all these home arts unless he had been acquainted with them and seen them practiced. The little rhyme is therefore an invaluable source of information concerning crafts of Iceland during the Middle Ages.

While these fine arts were very desirable accomplishments for young ladies of leisure, they were not essential. The majority of women had to devote every moment that could be spared from household duties, to the wool industry. **Að koma mjólk í mat og ull í fat**, (to produce meals from milk and wearables from wool), were the essential accomplishments, and in a country struggling with poverty and a lack of all necessities this is not surprising. A matron had to be able to supervise the work of her household to instruct and train inexperienced help, and — to do any needed task herself when the occasion demanded it.

The population at this time averaged less than fifty thousand. Yet it has been estimated that in the farm homes of Iceland, raw wool amounting to over a million pounds, was converted into clothing and other necessities annually, and all spinning had to be done with a spindle and the weaving was done on the vertical warp-weighted loom. No wonder they worked early and late for over seven months of the year!

Not until the latter part of the 18th century did the spinning wheel and the horizontal loom come into general use in Iceland. And not until the 19th century were knitting machines and sewing

machines introduced. Up to that time every stitch was sewn by hand. This applies to all clothing for men, women and children. The sheepskin shoes were sewn by the women too in addition to their other tasks. It wasn't until the late 19th and early 20th centuries that imported factory made shoes were in common use in rural districts.

Only where help was plentiful did ladies find time to embroider; but it was a popular pastime among young girls in well-to-do homes and older ladies of position.

Note: — It might be well to add that knitting was introduced into Iceland in the late 16th century (about 1570. By 1581 knitted goods were accepted in the payment of debt. This was apparently not always satisfactory, for records from 1590 contain a complaint from one of the bishops, who deplores the fact that "socks which do not last" are replacing the *vaðmál* of old in the payment of tithes. The defect in the socks must have been overcome, for by 1624 knitted goods were being exported in large quantities.

The 19th century ushered in a new era of progress. In 1854 free trade was established and brought with it increasing prosperity.

It was in the latter part of the 19th century that Sigurður Guðmundsson, a noted artist of Iceland, redesigned the festival costume with its high white headdress, the occasion being the celebration held in 1874, which marked the thousandth anniversary of the settlement of Iceland.

The festival dress might be said to be symbolic of Iceland. The high white headdress with its flowing veil suggests the snowy mountain peaks. The metallic embroidery on the bodice, has the glint of silvery streams. The flowers are seen in the border of the skirt, the verdant fields and valleys are reflected in the green velvet mantle.

Not only does the costume suggest the land itself, it is also representative of its arts and crafts. The border of the

skirt is embroidered in either the old Icelandic *blómstursaum* or the technique known as *skattéring* (which actually means shading). The former, as the name implies, was used in flower patterns and pictures where many colors were delicately blended. It is done with a soft loosely twisted thread and is rather suggestive of crewel work. The latter has the appearance of surface satin stitch. It is usually worked in a single color, the shading being produced by altering the angle of the stitch.

The metal crafts are represented in the belt of the costume and other ornaments which are usually of silver or silver-gilt in the Icelandic filigree, for although some of the table silver and church or communion silver is of excellent design and workmanship, it is in filigree that the art of the silversmiths of Iceland is seen at its best.

While most of the modern varieties of crochet and embroidery are found in Iceland, along with the ever popular Norwegian *Hardanger* and Danish *Hedebø*, the type of embroidery most closely associated with the country is the *Baldýring* or metallic embroidery. This is the embroidery used on the bodice of the National dress. It is done with either gold or silver wire, sewn over parchment. The effect is lovely when it is well done, but it requires much skill and patience. The narrow bands ornamenting the back seams of the bodice are a type of bobbin lace called *kniplingar*. Elaborate patterns were produced in bobbin-lace by the older lace makers of Iceland. This art appears, unfortunately to have been dropped. It is a pity, for lace made with a crochet hook however fine, can never take the place of woven lace. Of course there is always the possibility that the art may be revived. Iceland has become very craft conscious and old patterns and techniques are being revived. The patterns are simple and dignified with strong firm lines characteristic of the landscape with its clearly defined mountains and waterfalls. Flower and animal motifs are usually conventionalized but whatever the pattern may be, there is

always in evidence a well developed sense of proportion and balance. The country side is reflected in their colors which they combine beautifully, using misty greys, pale yellows, earth browns and mossy greens. The blues and reds are very like the oriental blues and reds, soft and clear.

The most common weaving techniques are the **salún**, which corresponds to the monks belt, the **Glit** similar to the Swedish **Dukagang**; **Krossvefnaður** similar to the Norwegian **Aklæ**, and **flos** which is pile-weaving. The figured pile-weaving of old, was very fine; it was done in a single color and had the appearance of cut felt. Card-weaving is another popular art, and is said to have reached a very high standard of perfection.

One of the foremost advocates of homecraft in Iceland today, is Miss Halldóra Bjarnadóttir, editor of **Hlín**, a periodical dealing entirely with home arts. Miss Bjarnadóttir visited this country some years ago, and brought with her an exhibit of work done with home-grown wool by the women of rural Iceland. There were rugs, wall hangings, drapes, wool-lace curtains, upholstery fabrics, bed clothing, couch throws, all types of underclothing and coat and dress fabrics, shawls and the finest filmiest wool lace scarves of natural wool shaded from white to deepest brown and fading back into white, pretty little insoles with bright patterns to wear inside sheepskin shoes, everything imaginable in knitted goods, and fine colors obtained from herb and plant dyes.

Increased tourist traffic has created a demand for souvenirs, some of which are very attractive. They make miniatures of the old fashioned carved wood bowls (**askar**) with cunning little handles and hinged covers, paper knives and other ornaments of bone, and quaint horn-spoons with carved inscriptions. Sheepskin shoes with their colorful insoles are reproduced in stone, and the native birds modelled in clay then tinted in natural colors and glazed, are especially lovely.

It would take too long to enumerate the many beautiful examples of the carver's art ancient and modern which are to be found in museums and art collections. These together with brasswork, leather tooling, bookbinding, and illuminated manuscripts must be seen to be appreciated.

This brief survey of home crafts of Iceland suffices to show, that few moments were spent in idleness. The hammer of the metal worker, the whirl of the spindle, the rhythmic beat of the loom broke the monotony of long uneventful winter days, and many a dull hour was brightened by the silvery sparkle of twinkling needles.

While these arts may not have aided the nation economically (with the exception of the wool industry) they enriched it greatly culturally. For without this contribution from its craftsmen the cultural history of Iceland would have lacked a very important chapter.

—Cuts kindly loaned by Mrs. E. P. Jónsson.

## The Icelandic Canadian

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## *A Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature In The University Of Manitoba*

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In September 1877, Lord Dufferin, then Governor General of Canada, paid an official visit to the Icelandic settlement at Gimli. After comparing their new homes and gardens and little clearings on the West shore of Lake Winnipeg with the farmsteads he had visited in Iceland many years earlier, he said, "I welcome you to this country . . . and remember that in coming among us, you will find yourselves associated with a race both kindly hearted and cognate to your own; nor in becoming Englishmen or subjects of Queen Victoria need you forget your own time-honoured customs or the picturesque annals of your forefathers. On the contrary, I trust you will continue to cherish for all time the heart-stirring literature of your nation, and that from generation to generation your little ones will continue to learn in your ancient sagas that industry, energy, fortitude, perseverance, and stubborn endurance have ever been the characteristics of the noble Icelandic race." Earlier in his address, he made this significant observation: "I have not entered a single hut or cottage in the settlement which did not contain, no matter how bare its walls, or scanty its furniture, a library of twenty or thirty volumes; and I am informed that there is scarcely a child amongst you who cannot read and write."

Some sixty odd years later, Lord Tweedsmuir, then Governor General of Canada and a distinguished scholar, addressing himself to the peoples of various origins, urged them not to lose or neglect their inheritance. He suggested that their particular contribution to Canada should be, in part, based on those qualities and customs which they had brought with them from the lands across the sea.

It is now over one thousand years since that small island, situated in the

North Atlantic, partly within the Western Hemisphere and partly in the Eastern Hemisphere was first colonized by people who came direct from Norway or who had sojourned for a time in Northern Scotland and Northern Ireland and others whom they brought with them. Since the year 874, the population of Iceland has varied from 20,000 to 130,000 people. During the intervening centuries, its people have made a valuable contribution in the realm of literature, culture and representative forms of government. Lord Stanley, spokesman for the delegates representing the British Parliament at the Millennial celebration of the Icelandic Althing in 1930, made this significant statement: "We as representatives of the Mother of Parliaments come to salute the Grandmother of Parliaments."

The contribution to the literature of Northern Europe in the middle ages was predominantly Norse and is preserved in the original form in the language which was spoken and understood in the Northern European countries, including The British Isles, during many centuries. This language is Icelandic. The most effective form of speech in English, in fact the language of the common man, is to be found in the purely Anglo-Saxon words. The roots of much of this portion of our English language are found in modern Icelandic. It is worth noting that about 39 universities and colleges in the world, now offer instruction in Icelandic.

The establishment of a Chair in Icelandic Language and Literature in the University of Manitoba, supported by donations from people of Icelandic descent, has been the cherished hope of many people for years. It is the opinion of many staunch friends of Iceland that a Chair in the University would provide



a permanent cultural link with the saga land of our forefathers. In fact it is the only way in which we can hope to perpetuate Icelandic culture and a knowledge of its history and literature among people of Icelandic descent and others who may become interested. It is, furthermore, the conviction of men and women who have given the matter serious consideration that immediate action is necessary to ensure success of this project. We are now in a position to seriously undertake the collection of adequate funds to assure the permanency of a Department of Icelandic in the University of Manitoba.

It has been estimated that a minimum of \$150,000.00 is necessary for our purpose of which approximately fifty percent has been promised or donated. This amount would in all probability be sufficient to inaugurate the new department. The interest from this fund plus a small annual subsidy would meet the salary of a professor and other expenses connected with the library and incidental expenses of the department. Ultimately, we should strive to provide the University with an endowment fund of \$200,000.00 to guarantee all the demands upon the department.

In 1944, Dr. Sidney E. Smith, then President of the University of Manitoba, stated: "For some years the Board of Governors has been considering the possibility of offering within the University instruction in this field," and then added: "The University of Manitoba has the best collection of Icelandic books of any Canadian University. Winnipeg

has the largest Icelandic population of any city with the single exception of Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland. The University of Manitoba, so strategically situated, could readily become the leading institution of higher learning in Canada for the study of Icelandic. There is in Icelandic literature unusually rich material in poetry and prose. Moreover, the study of Icelandic literature would open a field of investigation in comparative philology, particularly in old English and old German."

The establishment of a Chair of Icelandic in our University is, therefore, not a sentimental whim of the descendants of a pioneer people who wish to preserve their identity in a new land. No group has adopted the customs and language of this land more readily than the sons and daughters of Iceland. No other group is merging more rapidly by marriage and by social, business and professional association into our Canadian way of life.

For the reasons which I have mentioned, we have the satisfaction of knowing that this Chair in the University of Manitoba is one which will make a lasting contribution to the intellectual activities of the institution and give support to its Department of English.

On this basis, I make an appeal for a project which is worthy of the unanimous approval and support of the people of Icelandic origin in this country. Let us work together and achieve our purpose. The time to do this is now.

**P. H. T. Thorlakson, M.D.**

## To Our Readers

**R**EADERS are invited to send in news of people of Icelandic extraction, especially our soldiers overseas. Original articles and poems as well as translations from the Icelandic would be appreciated. Letters to the Editors may be published. You are invited to let us know what you think of our publication.

**THE EDITORS**

## *Canadian Citizenship and Our Wider Loyalties*

The above is the title of a book by the chairman of our Editorial Board, which will be off the press about the same time as this number of the Icelandic Canadian. As he prefers not to have any comments made by a fellow member of the board, I am quoting the following excerpts from the Foreword to the book by Dr. Solomon Frank.

"Judge W. J. Lindal has made, in the pages which follow, a significant contribution to the study of Canada's position in a rapidly shifting international scene. Where do our loyalties and responsibilities lie? What is Canada's position in the British Commonwealth of Nations? What of Canada and its place in a new world outlook which is even now in the process of evolution? What, if any, ideological stand must Canada permanently adopt? A careful consideration of these basic issues precede the study proper, a well documented exposition of the implications of the Canadian Citizenship Act sponsored by the Secretary of State, The Hon. Paul Martin and enacted by Parliament. The Act comes into force on January 1, 1947.

"As one views the history of the immediate past, it becomes increasingly apparent that the major obstacle to clarity of international thinking has consisted in the failure to comprehend the basic meaning of loyalty. To some, loyalty is still thought to consist of love for a particular land to the exclusion of every other portion of the earth's surface. While sectional patriotism may have at one period in human history served a worthwhile purpose, this outlook has failed with the world's factual shrinkage.

"We now find ourselves in a unitary world. No nation dwells in splendid isolation. Every adverse impact to society anywhere on the earth's surface is immediately felt everywhere. In this sense, no man's home is his castle. No

longer can he enter his private citadel, draw up his bridge behind him and feel safe in the knowledge that he can hold off all assailants. This outlook disappeared with advancing mechanical progress. We are safe only as long as our neighbors are safe. Our land is secure only to the extent that other lands are secure in their independence. Our democracy will guarantee our liberties to the extent that democracy becomes universal. Our love for Canada in no way interferes with our loyalty to the British Commonwealth of Nations and to the Crown. This loyalty in turn does not detract from our loyalty to the universal concept of freedom and to world citizenship. Loyalty properly understood, is not one. It is manifold. Judge Lindal vividly points out that this lesson is being slowly and painfully learned, and at a great cost. . . . .

"All this is introductory to Judge Lindal's major concern with the new Canadian Citizenship Act, a statute of vital meaning to every thoughtful Canadian. . . . .

"Judge Lindal's preoccupation with the broader aspects of Canadian citizenship is not a matter of recent interest. This issue has always been paramount in his thinking. It has been evident in his various public utterances. During the war, because of his concern with Canada's increasing importance, he found himself in a position to make a major contribution towards the growing unification of Canadian thought. . . . .

"We can well agree with the concluding words of his study: 'If the peoples of Canada succeed in properly correlating their diverse loyalties they have reason to feel that Canada is providing a pattern which other nations may well follow.'"

The book is published by the Canada Press Club. It is about 170 pages, cloth bound and printed on good quality paper. As the author's work is entirely

voluntary, the price is \$1.75 which just covers cost of publication. —

Orders will be accepted by the following:

Canada Press Club — 619 McDermot Avenue, Winnipeg.

Björnsson's Book Store — 702 Sargent Ave., Winnipeg.

The Icelandic Canadian — 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg.

G. Eliasson

## Karlagór Reykjavíkur

★

The visit of the Icelandic Male voice Choir, (Karlagór Reykjavíkur), was an event of profound significance to the people of Icelandic descent in the city of Winnipeg, which is the centre of Icelandic culture on this continent.

The choir is on a two months' tour of the United States, under contract to the National Concerts and Artists Corporation, to sing in 60 of the largest American cities. It was organized 20 years ago by its present conductor Sigurður Thorðarson: It toured the Scandinavian countries in 1935 and central Europe in 1938, scoring triumphant successes. Now it has taken America by storm.

When the Icelandic Singers turn homewards, December 15th, they will have thrilled with their superb artistry, countless thousands, in 25 states of the Union, and over 7500 people who listened to them in Winnipeg. So varied and so glowing are the tributes paid to them by music critics everywhere, that we feel almost justified in saying that they are perfect in their art. This they would no doubt deny, as true art sets its goal above and beyond any perfection that may already have been attained.

The choir has been lauded for the beautiful quality of its voices and for the perfect balance and blending of tone; for its technical skill and masterly discipline; for the masculine vigor, rhythmic energy and absolute precision of its presentation; for its broad contrasts of mood and style, and its expert gradation of tone.

The Washington Times Herald commends the singers especially for their

good taste in choosing mainly music of the typically folkish style, "such as has vanished from our lives, crowded out by films, juke boxes, and the radio". Another critic says: "The choir has proved that it stands in the front rank among world choirs".



SIGURDUR THORDARSON

The Winnipeg Tribune says in part: "... There is no display of virtuosity for its own sake, no theatricalism, everything is very simple and direct, with little mark of showmanship. . . Everything was done with a fine sincerity and conviction. . . . Sigurður Thorðarson is a superb musician and leader of his

men. He is completely self-effacing, while his authority is sure. . . ."

Like their gifted leader, many of whose compositions were sung by the choir, the 36 members are all engaged in some business or other to earn their living. But music is their love rather than a hobby or a sideline.

Two outstanding soloists accompany the choir and did impressive solo sequences in many of the works presented, as well as a number of solo numbers. Stefán (Guðmundsson) Íslandi possesses an exceptional tenor voice which he uses with great artistry and technical skill. Guðmundur Jónsson's baritone is rich in quality and fluent in expression and modulation. A special word of praise must go to the pianist, Fritz Weissappel, who accompanied with such a sensitive, yet unobtrusive skill.

In Winnipeg, the only city in Canada visited by the singers, they were accorded the warmest reception and wholehearted admiration, as elsewhere. But they were given something more! It was here, as also in Icelandic communities that they visited in the States, that they experienced that deep and abiding warmth of feeling which lives in the hearts of Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent, for their kinsmen beyond the Atlantic.

Winnipeg was the only city where the choir gave two performances, both being sponsored by the Celebrity Concert series. At the second concert, November 19th., Icelanders from far and wide came to hear it and almost filled the vast Auditorium. They came in cars, and in specially chartered buses and railway coaches, from Saskatchewan, Ontario, and outlying districts in Manitoba. It was unthinkable to miss this unique event.

The citizens did what they could in the short space of the Singers' visit, to make them welcome. The city of Winnipeg, through the person of Mayor

Garnet Coulter and his council, accorded them the signal honor of tendering them a luncheon-reception at the Fort Garry Hotel, November 18th., and inviting about 200 of the Icelandic citizens to attend. A reception was held in the afternoon of the same day, at the First Lutheran church, where the public was given an opportunity to meet the singers.

Following the concert Tuesday evening, a banquet was held at "The Flame" under the auspices of the Icelandic National League and the Winnipeg Icelandic Male Voice choir, and attended by 400 people. On behalf of the League, the president Rev. V. J. Eylands presented the choir with an illuminated address. Guðmundur Stefánsson brought greetings from the Winnipeg choir, and on its behalf presented the singers with an original poem on a decorated scroll. Each member of the *Karлакór Reykjavíkur* was presented with a bound copy of the book, *Iceland's Thousand Years*, from the Icelandic Canadian Club and the League. G. L. Johannsson, Icelandic consul in Winnipeg, spoke briefly.

Reports have come from some other communities where the choir visited. At Gardar, N. D., the choir was entertained at a banquet attended by 150 people; at Grand Forks, Dr. and Mrs. R. Beck were hosts to the singers at a dinner; Dr. Arni Helgason entertained them at luncheon, at the Norse club, Chicago. On this occasion he invited a large number of Icelandic citizens to meet the singers.

Wherever the *Karлакór* sang, all over America, there have no doubt been among the listeners, some descendants of the Icelandic pioneers in this country, and they have felt once more an upsurge of that feeling of kinship with their own stock, their ancestry and the country of their origin. And they have been profoundly touched and thrilled listening to the exquisite "voice" from the "old country". It is an experience they will not soon forget.

H. D.



## *Farm Boy Builds Organ*

★

To enter the Steve Kolbeinson farm house near Kindersley, Sask., would put you in mind of the stage at the intermission of a symphony concert.

Included in the line-up of musical instruments is a pipe organ which Stewart Kolbeinson, a son, installed himself.

Among the other instruments are, a bass viol, two guitars, a small harp, a clarinet, no less than seven violins and a grand piano. One of the violins, pride of Mr. Kolbeinson's heart is a Testore, made about 1737 and valued at \$1,300. That figure is what Mr. Kolbeinson refused for it recently. There are a couple of radios and a phonograph attachment with several volumes of classical and semi-classical recordings.

Steve Kolbeinson comes of Icelandic stock and bought a farm here in 1929 after homesteading in the Alsask district in 1909. The family is quiet and all the members are hard working, good farmers with a genius for music, any kind of music.

### **Organ Interest**

But to get back to the organ. Stewart can't tell you just when or how his fancy turned to organs and their construction.

"I guess I was always interested in them", he says. "From the time I was a little fellow I loved their tone and used to listen to them every chance I got. Then I started to read about them in books and magazines — there's a lot of material if you know where to look for it, and want to badly enough. I got a lot of preliminary information that way."

In recent years he has put that information to work, too. He spent a couple of winters in Toronto working with Cassavant Freres, tuning organs in the great churches of the east, and getting a thorough grounding in their construction and installation.



**Stewart Kolbeinson at the organ**

He made valuable contacts with organ builders and masters in various lines, and all this he has found useful in his own unique enterprise. He keeps his organ tuned to concert pitch.

In 1938 he decided to build an organ of his own in the farm home. A long music room was added to the south wall of the building, both to accommodate the console of the organ and to act as a sounding room for its tone. Another room, 10 feet square and 13 feet high, was added to the east wall to house the pipes themselves. Cyril Robbins, master organ builder of Toronto, was consulted, as was William F. Legg of Burford, Ont., and Mr. Legg stopped off for a couple of weeks to help Stewart with the actual installation.

### **Two Weeks' Job**

It took just a couple of weeks to complete the whole assembly. During that time they installed the wind-chest, specially built by Cyril Robbins in To-

ronto, and into it they fitted the more than 700 pipes which are the heart of the organ itself.

To step into the organ room is like walking into a three-dimensional surrealist's dream. You enter through a small wall-papered panel in a quiet bedroom, and are faced with row upon row of pipes in an orderly but confusing array. Towering beside you and all around two walls are the bass pipes, some of them jointed and coiled around to fit their length into the room. Then smaller ones, each tier a different size and shape, right down to the tiny pipes at the bottom, thinner than the thinnest pencil.

### Unified

The organ is "unified", as Stewart calls it, consisting of 10 ranks of pipes extended to 32 stops. The pipes themselves range in "speaking length" from 16 feet to one inch, and are, with only one exception, hand-made by Canadian craftsmen. That one is an oboe stop, imported from the United States. Most of the pipes are made of a special metal alloy, and were manufactured at the Cassavant Freres' factory in Quebec.

About thirty of the pipes came from a church in Saskatoon, and there are a few hand-carved wooden ones which Stewart got from old St. Mary's Church in Regina. He treasures them especially for their quiet beautiful tone.

There isn't room for many additions, but Stewart hopes to add to the pipes, and recently he has been busy installing some new ones and will put in more when they are available.

The blower which supplies the wind-chest of the organ is situated in the

basement of the house, and has a special centrifugal fan developed for organ by William Legg at Burford, Ont. Power comes from a small 32-volt, one-half h.p. motor out in the back yard, and all the electricity needed for the console itself is supplied by two six-volt car batteries. The console is about 32 feet from the organ pipes and is connected by cables which carry over 700 wires.

Wiring them all was a really tricky job, Stewart says, and he is justly proud of the fact that he did it all himself.

Two or three times a year the music-lovers of Kindersley district get a chance to hear the organ in full-dress recital. Invitations go out by phone and rural grapevine, and on a Sunday afternoon there may be anywhere from 50 to a 100 people jammed into the rambling house and overflowing onto the lawn outside. Sometimes Stewart will consent to play a few numbers at such gatherings, but mostly he sits in the background and lets the imported organist lead the instrument and the audience through the whole gamut of its emotions. Wilfred Woolhouse, organist of Knox United church, Saskatoon, has been out twice in the past year; and an organist and adjudicator from Winnipeg, played at a special program during the festival this spring.

The rest of the family sometimes assist too. Besides the father, whose great love is the violin, there is another son, Lauren, and two daughters who are outstanding pianists and accomplished violinists.

Stewart is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stefan Kolbeinson at Kindersley. His grandparents are Þórður and Guðríður Kolbeinsson, formerly of Tantallon, Sask.  
—By courtesy of Leader Post, Regina.

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# OUR WAR EFFORT



**Fred L. Bjornson**



**S. 1/c Al. Bjornson**

**FRED L. BJORNSON**—Born June 4, 1925 at Grafton, N. D. Entered the service Sept. 13, 1943 and served as an aviation radio man for 9 mos. Was naval aviation cadet for 15 mos. Released Oct. 3, 1945.

**SEAMAN 1/c AL. BJORNSON**—Born Oct. 11, 1927 at Grand Forks, N. D. Entered the U. S. Navy June 3, 1945, receiving his boot training at San Diego, Calif., and was stationed at Alameda Naval Air Station. Received his discharge in August 1946.

**SONS OF MR. & MRS. SIG. BJORNSON, MOORHEAD, MINN.**



**THORA MARGARET PAUL**—Entered the U. S. Cadet Nurses Corps Jan. 1943. She is taking her training at Evanston Hosp. Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Paul, Chicago, Ill., (formerly Winnipeg, Man.).



**SVAVA HELGASON**—Enlisted in R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Jan. 1943. Was stationed at Dartmouth, Halifax, Brandon, Winnipeg and Gimli. Discharged Jan. 1946. Daughter of Mrs. Gudridur and the late Johannes Helgason, Riverton, Man.



**L.A.C. Richard Dalman**



**L.A.C. H. S. Dalman**

**L.A.C. RICHARD DALMAN**—Born at Selkirk, Man., May 25, 1921. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. 1941. Served overseas from April 1945 until May 1946.

**L.A.C. HERBERT SAMUEL DALMAN**—Born at Selkirk, Man., Oct. 22, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. 1942. Served overseas two years. Returned Jan. 1946.

**SONS OF MR. NORMAN AND THE LATE GLADYS DALMAN, SELKIRK, MAN.**



**DONALD HENRY STONESON**—Born May 22, 1922 in San Francisco, Calif. Inducted into U. S. Army Oct. 1942. Trained at Shepard Field, Texas, Sioux City, S. D., and Great Lakes Air Station. Overseas by way of New York, North Africa, Egypt to Assam, India. Stationed in India for duration of war. Has now been discharged. Son of Mr. & Mrs. E. L. Stoneson, San Francisco, Cal.



**CPL. KRISTVIN HELGASON**—Born at Selkirk, Man., Nov. 13, 1905. Enlisted in U. S. Army Oct. 1943. Served with 17th Airborne Div. from Sept. 1944. Received 3 bronze stars, "The Battle of the Bulge", "Crossing of the Rhine" and "Central Germany Collapse". Son of the late Helgi and Kristin Sveinson, Lundar, Man. Foster son of Mr. & Mrs. Eirikur Helgason, Kandahar, Sask.





L.-Cpl. N. A. Dalman



Pte. G. L. Dalman

**L.-CPL. NORMAN ARTHUR DALMAN**—Born at Selkirk, Man., April 9, 1919. Enlisted Aug. 1941 with R.C.E. Served overseas three years, returning in January 1946. Discharged February 1946.

**PTE. GORDON LORNE DALMAN**—Born at Selkirk, Man., May 26, 1926. Enlisted Nov. 1944. During training at Fort Garry was injured in an accident Dec. 1944. Discharged August 1945.

**SONS OF MR. & MRS. INGO DALMAN, PETERSFIELD, MAN.**



**P.F.C. VALDIMAR PETERSON**—Born in Reykjavík, Iceland, July 24, 1907. Was rifleman with 90th Infantry Div., U. S. Army. He received the Good Conduct Medal and Middle Eastern Theatre Campaign Ribbon. — Son of Pjetur Bjarnason and Herdis Gudmundsdóttir, Dorchester, Mass.



**SECT LDR. ARCHIE HERBERT GRANT**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 7, 1907. Joined the Canadian Fire Fighters Aug. 20, 1942. Embarked overseas Oct. 10, 1942. Returned Mar. 4, 1945. Son of Mrs. Helga and the late Herbert H. Grant. Probably the only member of the Canadian Fire Fighters of Icelandic origin.



M.M. 1/c O. B. Olgeirson

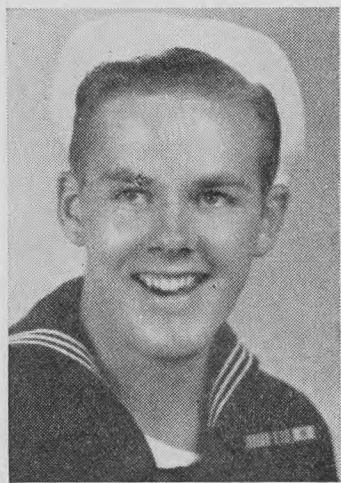


Sgt. Einar S. Olgeirson

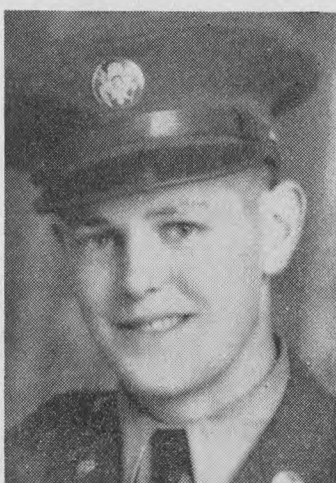
**MACH. MATE 1/c OLGEIR B. OLGEIRSON**—Born at Edinburg, N. D., July 29, 1914. Enlisted in U. S. Navy Jan. 1942. Served in North African, Asiatic and Pacific Campaigns. Discharged Oct. 9, 1945.

**SGT.— EINAR S. OLGEIRSON**—Born April 13, 1912 at Edinburg, N. D. Entered service May 1942. Embarked overseas Jan. 1943. Served in North Africa, Sicily and European Theatre. Discharged Oct. 1945.

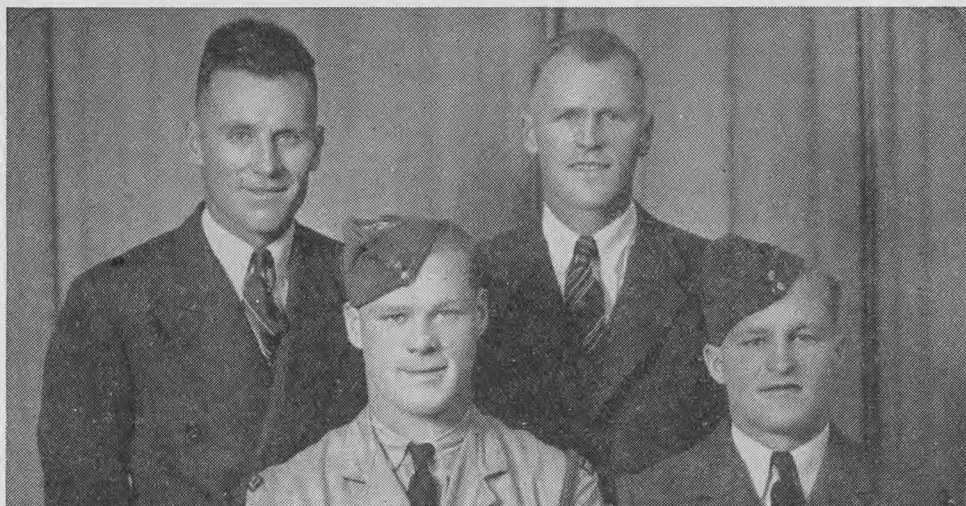
**SONS OF MRS. THORDIS (Daviðsdóttir) AND THE LATE  
MR. GEIRMUNDUR OLGEIRSON, EDINBURG, N. D.**



**F.C. 2/c CLIFFORD K. THORKELSON**—Born in Chicago, Ill., Aug. 4, 1925. Joined the U. S. Army Nov. 1943. Embarked overseas Aug. 3, 1944. Served in the Atlantic and Pacific. Son of Thorarinn and Una (Oddson) Thorkelson, River Grove, Ill.



**CPL. TECH. ALLAN ODDSON**—Born at Lundar, Man., Jan. 11, 1924. Enlisted in U.S. Army Mar. 1, 1943. Served 28 mos. overseas in the Coast Artillery on the Island of Oahu, T.H. Discharged Dec. 20, 1945. Son of Oddur and Sigrun Oddson, formerly of Lundar, Man.



**Helgi Howardson Gudmundur Howardson Oscar Howardson John Howardson**

**HELGI HOWARDSON**—Born at Siglunes, Man. Joined the R.C.N.V.R. and served on the Pacific coast.

**GUDMUNDUR HOWARDSON**—Born at Siglunes, Man. Joined the P.P.C.L.I. in 1941. Served in Africa and Italy. Returned to Canada in 1945.

**OSCAR HOWARDSON**—Born at Siglunes, Man. Joined the R.C.N.V.R. and served on the Pacific coast.

**JOHN HOWARDSON**—Born at Siglunes, Man. Joined the R.C.A.F. Embarked for overseas in 1944. Returned Oct. 1945.

**SONS OF JÓN AND THE LATE MARIA HOWARDSON, VANCOUVER, B. C.,**



**PVT. THORUNN E. BULLIS**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., March 2, 1912. Enlisted in W.A.C. April 12, 1944. Served at Oglethorpe, Ga., Rapid City, S. D., and Tampa, Fla. Discharged Oct. 30, 1945. Daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Helgi Oddson, Lundar, Man.



**MARIE GLADYS ODDSON**—Born in Ottawa, Ont., April 3, 1921. Enlisted in C.W.A.C. Dec. 1943. Served at Fort Garry, Man. Discharged Jan. 1946. — Daughter of Torfi and Hilda Oddson, Wilsons Corner, P. Q.



Pte. G. A. Jacobson



L.-Cpl. E. F. Jacobson

**PTE. GUDMUNDUR ADALSTEINN JACOBSON**—Born at Arborg, Man., March 12, 1921. Entered the service Jan. 20, 1943. Trained at North Bay, N.B., and Terrace, B.C. Went overseas Jan 14, 1945. Served in Belgium and Holland. Returned Oct. 6, 1945.

**L.-CPL. ERNEST FREEMAN JACOBSON**—Born at Arborg, Man., Oct. 26, 1919. Entered the service June 19, 1941. Trained at Portage La Prairie, Man. and Nanaimo, B. C. Joined the Irish Fusiliers and took his command at Vernon, B. C.

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**SONS OF MR. & MRS. GUDMUNDUR JACOBSON, ARBORG, MAN.**

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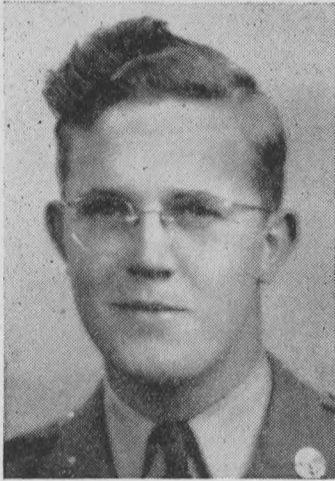


**CPL. STEPHEN B. SIGURDSON**—Born in Edinburg, N. D., May 20, 1914. Entered the service July 10, 1942. Embarked for overseas Dec. 1943. Served in the European theatre. Discharged Sept. 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. H. B. (Olive Halldorson) Sigurdson, Edinburg, N. D.



**CFN. G. R. SIGURDSON**—Born in Iceland in 1923. Enlisted with R.C.O.C. May 23, 1942. Embarked overseas Sept. 14, 1943. Served with Black Watch until he was injured. Was transferred to R.C.E.M.E. Returned Jan. 8, 1946. Son of Oscar Sigurdson, Winnipeg, Man.





**S.-SGT. NORMAN GUDMUNDSON**—Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, May 19, 1921. Served with the Military Police, 9th Div., U. S. Air Force. He received the following medals: American Defence Service Medal, Distinguished Unit Badge, European, African, Middle Eastern Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. Son of Andrjes S. Gudmundson of Djúpavogi, Suður-Múlasýslu, Iceland and Elisabet of Copenhagen, Denmark, residing in Whitman, Mass.



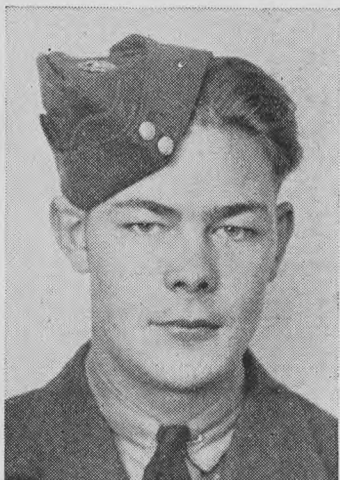
**T5 FREDERICK GUNNARSON**—Born at Mountain, N. D., April 6, 1912. Joined U. S. Army April 1942. Trained at Fort Riley, Kan., Calif., and Camp McCoy, before embarking overseas. Spent 3½ years in service. He received 2 battle stars, the E.T.O. Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantry Badge and American Service Ribbon. Discharged Dec. 1945. Son of Gunnar Thorleifson Gunnarson & Guðrún Guðfinna (Friðriksdóttir) Gunnarson, Milton, N. D.



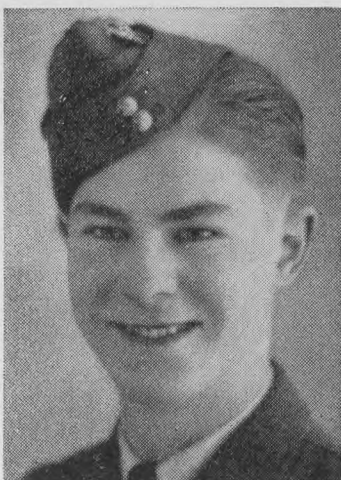
**PTE. HALLDOR S. HALLSON**—Born Dec. 1, 1922 at Winnipeg, Man. Enlisted in the fall of 1942. Went overseas Oct. 1943. Served in England, Italy and Holland. Returned to Canada Jan. 1946. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Ed. Hallson, Lundar, Man.



**L.A.C. SIGURDUR JON TRAUSTI SIGURDSON**—Born at Lundar, Man., Jan. 25, 1919. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. July 1943. Trained at Brandon and Winnipeg. Was equipment assistant. Discharged May 6, 1946. Son of Ingimundur and Asta Sigurdson, Lundar, Man.



L.A.C. W. C. Niven

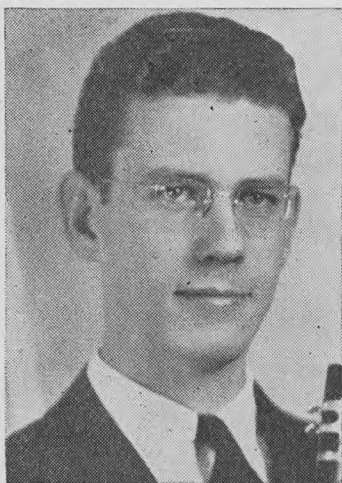


L.A.C. R. L. Niven

**L.A.C. WILLIAM CAMERON NIVEN**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 4, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Nov. 1942. Served in Dartmouth, N. S., until he received his discharge in Oct. 1945.

**L.A.C. RAYMOND LLOYD NIVEN**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., July 28, 1924. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Aug. 1943. Went overseas in 1944. Discharged Oct. 1945.

**SONS OF WILLIAM & LENA (Oddson) NIVEN, WINNIPEG, MAN.**



**T4 MAGNUS DANIEL MAGNUSSON**—Born at Hallson, N. D., April 4, 1920. Was with 247th Army Ground Force Band. He had 3 years service in Continental U. S. from Jan. 1943 to Dec. 1945. Son of Mrs. Svana Magnusson and the late Kristjan Magnusson, San Diego, Calif.



**PTE. J. EGILL REYKDAL**—Born at Dafoe, Sask., July 16, 1918. Joined the Canadian Army Feb. 1941. Was in Holland with Lake Superior Regt., and in England with the Provost Corps. Discharged March 1946. Son of Mrs. Jonina (Gislason) and the late Asgrimur Reykdal, Dafoe, Sask.

**FLT.-SGT. GUDMUNDUR MYRDAL —**

Born at Lundar, Man., April 8, 1923. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Dec. 1942. Trained at Regina, Chatham and Mountain View. Graduated as Navigator - Bombadier Sept. 1944. Was stationed at Summerside, P.E.I., and Patricia Bay, B. C., on patrol duty. Discharged Aug. 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Guðni J. Myrdal, Lundar, Man.

**SGT. CHRISTINN GUDMUNDUR MARTIN**

—Born at Hnausa, Man., Feb. 7, 1918. Enlisted in Can. Army Aug. 4, 1943, later joining P.P.C.L.I. at Portage La Prairie. Won a medal for marksmanship. Transferred to R.C.A.F. Feb. 3, 1944, graduating in flight engineering as Sargeant. Discharged Sept. 1943. Son of Antonius & Fridrika Martin, Arnes, Man.

**CHRISTIAN E. CHRISTIANSSON —**

Born Feb. 20, 1898 in Tálknafjörður, Iceland. Enlisted in U. S. Coast Guard July 24, 1942. Was Commanding Officer for 18 mos. on Greenland Patrol, and later served in the South Pacific. Son of Kristján Arngrímsson and Thórey Eiríksdóttir, Arlington, Mass.

**F.O. KRISTJAN MAGNUS ODDSON--**

Born in Winnipeg, Man., Mar. 16, 1925. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Dec. 1, 1942, graduating as pilot in 1944. Posted overseas Dec. 1944. Completed operational tour with R.A.F. in India. Discharged April 1946. Son of Mrs. Asta (Austman) and the late Leifur Oddson, Winnipeg.



Sgt. Christine & Pvt. Magnus Steinolfson

## In Memoriam

★

**PVT. STEINGRIMUR STEINOLFSON**—Born near Mountain, N. D., Oct. 6, 1914. Inducted into U.S. Army Dec. 28, 1941. Embarked for overseas April, 1942. He was stationed in Australia until Sept. 1942, when posted to New Guinea. He was killed in action Dec. 6, 1942 in the Battle of Buna.



Pvt. S. Steinolfson

**SONS & DAUGHTER OF MR. & MRS. T. H. (Maria Lovisa Sigurdson)  
STEINOLFSON, MOUNTAIN, N. D.**



## In Memoriam

★

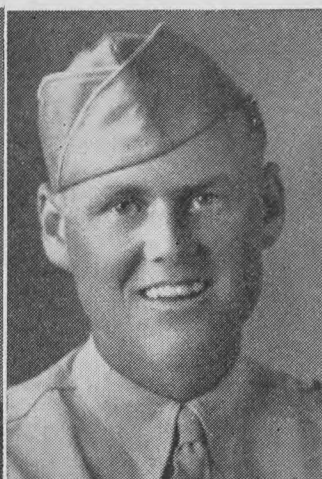
**CPL. JÓN B. BJORNSON**

Born 1910 in Tálknafjörður, Iceland. Entered U. S. Army March 4, 1942. He was on a Mine Planter. He was lost at sea in Oct. 1945, when the fishing trawler "Medford" was struck by a troop transport. Son of Einar Jónasson and Ingibjörg Christiansdóttir, Arlington, Mass.





T4 Otto S. Bernhoft



S.-Sgt. O. T. C. Bernhoft



Pvt. Alfred F. Bernhoft

**T4 OTTO S. BERNHOFT**—Born April 27, 1918. Inducted into U. S. Army Oct. 29, 1942. Posted to Detached Medical Dept., Wakeman Convalescent Hospital, Camp Atterbury, Ind. Served in Minnesota, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and North Dakota.

**S.-SGT. ORVILLE T. C. BERNHOFT**—Born April 27, 1918. He was inducted into the 291st Regt., U. S. Army, March 22, 1943. Embarked overseas Oct. 22, 1944. Served in England, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Returned Jan. 5, 1946. Discharged Jan. 17, 1946. He was awarded the Expert Combat Infantry Badges, Good Conduct Medal, European Theatre ribbon with three campaign stars, the American Theatre ribbon and the Victory ribbon.

**PVT. ALFRED F. BERNHOFT**—Born June 8, 1901. Inducted into U. S. Army Aug. 21, 1942. Posted to Medical Dept., General Hospital, Camp Carson, Col. Served at Camp Grant, Ill., Fort Snelling, Minn. Discharged March 23, 1943.



## In Memoriam

★

### P.F.C. A. LEONARD BERNHOFT

Born Feb. 26, 1917 at Cavalier, N. D. Joined the 164th Regt., U. S. Army, Apr. 22, 1941. He saw service at Louisiana, Australia, New Caledonia, Fiji Islands, Guadalcanal, Bougainville and the Philippine Islands. He lost his life Feb. 28, 1945, during heavy action on Leyte. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, Good Conduct Medal, Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation, Asiatic-Pacific Theatre Ribbon with 3 campaign stars, Pre-Pearl Harbor and the Philippine Liberation ribbons.

SONS OF MRS. SOFFIA (Brynjólfson) BERNHOFT AND THE LATE  
EDWARD BERNHOFT, CAVALIER, N. D.

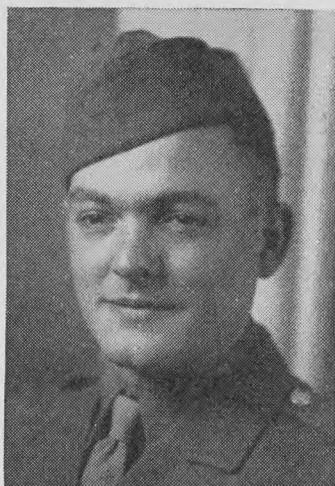
Two sons, Olafur and Wilhelm, served in World War 1.

## In Memoriam



### S.-SGT. LARUS THEODORE SNYDAL

Born at Gardar, N. D., Jan. 29, 1919. Joined the U. S. Air Force July 1942. Served in several parts of the U. S. before embarking overseas. He was killed on his first mission over enemy territory, June 11, 1943. He was awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster and the Purple Heart. Son of Skarphéðinn (Jónsson) and Kristin Snydal, Gardar, N. D.



S.-Sgt. L. T. Snydal

### S.-SGT. KRISTJAN THEODOR VIVATSON

Born at Gardar, N. D., July 20, 1919. Entered the Air service July 29, 1942 and was radio assistant on a B4 (Liberator) Bomber. Embarked overseas in April 1943 and was posted to Guadalcanal Island. Operating from there his plane was lost on a combat mission over Bougainville Island on Dec. 4, 1943. He was awarded the Air Medal and three Oak Leaf Clusters. Son of Mr. & Mrs. H. W. Vivatson, Svold, N. D.

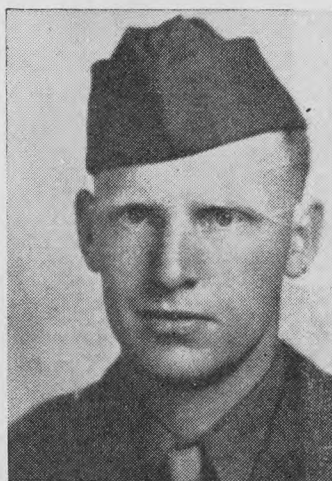


S.-Sgt. K. T. Vivatson



### PVT. STEPHEN OLASON

Born at Lillesve, Man., July 4, 1920. He enlisted in the Cavalry Unit of the U. S. Army; later transferred to the Engineers. After training at various centres he was sent to Burma and placed in an airborne crew. While thus engaged he was killed in action Dec. 14, 1944. He was awarded the Purple Heart, the Air Medal and a citation stating he was in 32 missions dropping supplies to allied forces in the Burmese area. Son of Mr. & Mrs. John Olason, Hensel, N. D.



Pvt. Stephen Olason

## *The Icelandic Contribution In The Building Of A Nation*

By HONOURABLE J. S. McDIARMID,  
Minister of Mines & Natural Resources

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Last month Manitoba was favored with a visit from a group of Icelandic singers who completely charmed a Winnipeg audience with their musical abilities. A short time before Manitoba was accorded unusually fine publicity when a national magazine carried a story and pictures of a group of Icelandic Canadians celebrating a midsummer festival at Gimli. Just a few years ago the whole world joined in expressions of admiration as the Icelandic Parliament celebrated the 1,000th anniversary of its founding.

These three instances are but a few of many that might be cited to illustrate the important contribution being made by persons of Icelandic descent to the development of Canadian culture and world understanding. Wherever these people choose to live, whatever organizations they sponsor or belong to, whatever they choose as a lifetime vocation, their presence and the part they can play in achieving success is always valued.

It is difficult to think of a vocation, industry or business in the Province of Manitoba in which Canadians of Icelandic descent are not playing a vital role. Many of them are fishermen on Manitoba's great inland lakes, and often they are to be

found manning boats which they have built themselves. And what could be more reasonable? It is a matter of historical record that the Vikings were the first to venture on the larger seas, in boats of their own making in which they had unquestioned confidence.

That was many centuries ago, but the spirit of adventure, the enthusiasm for tackling new jobs, of going on to wider horizons of trade and learning, has not grown less with the passing of time. The Vikings of old might well be proud of their descendants here in Canada, proud that they have chosen such a land of youthful vigour, with its promise of future greatness, in which to demonstrate their diversified talents.

Manitoba is proud of the Icelandic contribution to its strength, culture and virility. People of Icelandic origin have distinguished themselves in many fields of endeavor, and always to the credit of the Province which they or their forbears have chosen as their New World home. The Icelandic people have become an integral part of this Province, adding their unique contribution to the development of this particular area and to the Dominion of Canada as a whole.

## Scholarship Winners

★



**ALDA PALSSON**

The brilliant young pianist, Alda Pálsson, who is studying with the famous pianist, Lubka Kolessa, has recently won another coveted music scholarship, at the Conservatory Senior School, which is under the direction of Dr. Arnold Walter. This is a Senior School Tuition Scholarship to the amount of \$250, and a Maintenance Scholarship of \$200.

Alda is the daughter of Jónas Pálsson, Winnipeg pianist and teacher, and his wife, Emily Helga (daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Baldvinson). Mr. and Mrs. Pálsson now reside in New Westminster, B. C.

★

The following are winners of scholarships awarded to rural students, to attend courses at the Manitoba University, they are for \$325.00 each.

Grace L. Hjaltason, Glenboro, Man.

Olaf J. Magnusson, Baldur, Man.

Ellen Sigurdsson, Gimli, Man.

Florence V. Stefanson, Oak View, Man.



**THORA ASGEIRSON**

Winnipeg born pianist, has recently won two Musical Scholarships, at the University of Manitoba: The Wednesday Morning Musical Scholarship, and the Jón Sigurdsson, I.O.D.E. Scholarship. — Thora is the daughter of Jón and Oddný Ásgeirsson of Winnipeg.



**ELIN V. JOHNSTON**

Graduate of the Winnipeg General



Hospital 1945, later with the Victorian Order of Nurses, has been awarded the V.O.N. Scholarship, enabling her to attend the public health nursing course offered in several Canadian universities. Ellen will study at the University of British Columbia. She is the daughter of Helga Johnston and the late Paul Johnston of Winnipeg.

★



**CLAIRE HOWARD**

of Selkirk, Man., won the 1944 Toronto Conservatory of Music Silver Medal in Grade 10 Piano, and recently the University Womens' Club Scholarship at the Manitoba University, for her ability in piano playing. Claire is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Howard, Selkirk, Man. Mrs. Howard was the former Elin Asmundsson.

Miss Jonina Summers, teacher in Winnipeg for a number of years, has a years leave of absence from the Winnipeg School Board, and is at present teaching in Norwalk, Cal., 14 miles from Los Angeles.

## *In The News*

★



**MARGARET PETERSON**

was chosen queen of Success Business College at the annual fall dance held recently in the Crystal ballroom of the Royal Alexandra hotel. Miss Peterson arrived recently from Reykjavík, Iceland.

★

In the State election of North Dakota, Nov. 5, all the Icelandic candidates were elected to office. They are as follows: Nels G. Johnson, Attorney-General, re-elected by a large majority; J. M. Snowfield, State Attorney of Cavalier County, elected for the 12th time; Fred M. Snowfield, elected for the 5th time, State Attorney of Pembina County; Oscar B. Benson, State Attorney of Bottineau County; F. M. Einarsson, State Representative and John B. Snydal, County Commissioner.

★

Correction: In the article on Magnus Hjalmarson (June issue), his wife's father was given as Sveinn Thorvaldson. This is incorrect, she is Beth, the daughter of Elis Thorvaldson of Mountain, N.D.



#### SVAVA LOUISE MAGNUSSON

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Magnusson of Leslie, Sask., is now secretary to the Icelandic Minister to the United States. Miss Magnusson took over this position early in September. Prior to this for the past few years she has been employed by the British Army Staff in Washington, D. C. She was recently honored by the British Government, being made a Member of the British Empire.



#### ELMA DAGMAR ODDSTAD

Born Nov. 13, 1922 in Blaine, Wash. Graduated from San Francisco Junior College and joined the National Broadcasting Company. Completed Radio Engineering course with NBC in April 1945 and became only woman member of engineering staff. Now engineers the broadcasts over NBC station KPO, San Francisco, Cal. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Oddstad, San Francisco, Cal.

### Iceland's Thousand Years

★

The book, *Iceland's Thousand Years* was such an immediate success, that a second edition was printed, which is handsomely bound, and lettered in gold leaf.

We have received scores of letters that pay tribute to the value of the book. Following are brief excerpts from letters received from leading men who are interested in this venture:

"After having read the book, I wish to congratulate you heartily; it seems to me the book is a great credit, not only to the Icelandic Canadian Club, . . . but also to all the lecturers, and most especially to Iceland itself, and us Icelanders.

"I think you are on the right way in

creating an interest in Iceland, using the English language, and I think your work is invaluable; and probably that will be the part that endures after the language has been lost" (to the general public, here). . .

Dr. Helgi P. Briem,  
Consul-General, New York

"It has given me great pleasure to study the contents of this book, and I know that it will be a big factor in acquainting people in this country with the history and culture of Iceland. . . It is especially suitable for sending to those people who, because of their interest in Iceland, and their love of knowledge in general, write us, requesting material and information on Icelandic history and culture. . ."

Thor Thors,  
Icelandic Minister to Washington

"May I express my personal appreciation of the splendid work you are doing in making known, in English, something of the history, literature and traditions of the Icelandic race."

Hon. J. T. Thorson, Ottawa, Can.

"It is indeed a fine and valuable volume. . ."

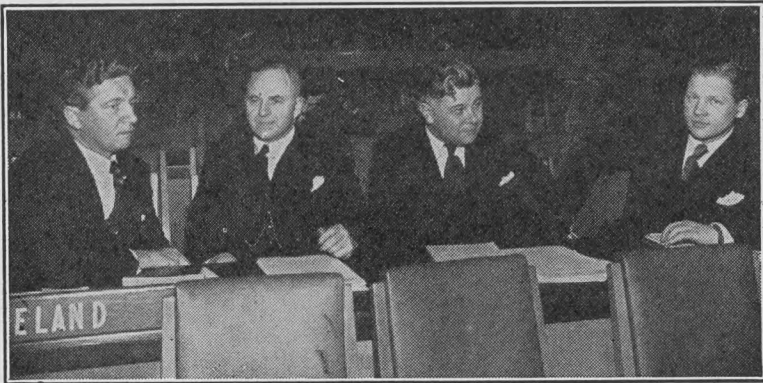
Dr. H. Hermannsson,  
Cornell University, N.Y.

"This worthy endeavor of yours . . . warms our hearts here in Iceland. There is no doubt that the idea is good: to make known to the descendants of the Icelanders (in America) the traditions and culture of Iceland, in a language

that they can all understand; and thus arouse their interest in the land of their ancestry, and in the Icelandic language . . ."

Sveinn Bjornsson,  
President of Iceland

The book will make a most acceptable Christmas gift. The first edition is selling at \$1.50 per copy, while it lasts. The bound edition sells for \$2.50 each. There is a discount of 25% if 3 or more copies are ordered by the same person. The book is postpaid, and on request gift orders will be sent direct, with gift cards enclosed. Order from: Mrs. H. F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg, Can.



The Icelandic delegates at the Assembly (left to right): Hon Thor Thors; Finnur Jónsson, attorney-general; Bjarni Benediktsson, Mayor of Reykjavik; and Ólafur Jóhannesson.

#### **Iceland admitted to United Nations**

On the 19th, of November, last, Iceland was formally admitted to the United Nations, at an impressive ceremony, culminating in the signing of the United Nations Charter on Iceland's behalf by Hon. Thor Thors, Iceland's Minister to the United States.

Hon. Thor Thors delivered the address to the United Nations Conference, and the President of the Assembly, Mr. P. H. Spaak, Foreign Minister of Belgium, welcomed Iceland to the United Nations, together with Afghanistan and Sweden. All the delegates from other nations warmly applauded the newly admitted members. The Icelandic delegates, Hon.

Thor Thors, Finnur Jónsson, Bjarni Benediktsson and Ólafur Jóhannesson then took their seats in the General Assembly. The Icelandic flag was hoisted outside the meeting place in honor of Iceland, the 53rd, member of the United Nations.

A message of best wishes was sent to His Excellency, Ólafur Thors, Prime Minister of Iceland, by the Right Honourable L. S. St. Laurent, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and chairman of the Canadian delegation to the United Nations. Among others who personally welcomed the Icelandic delegates were Mr. John Bracken and the representatives from Norway and Denmark.



#### IN FULL ICELANDIC FESTIVE COSTUME

Merlene McKell (seated) and (standing, left to right) Laurel Argyle, Norma Bearnson and Mary Jane Jarvis greeted the visitors from Canada and many western states at the annual Iceland Day, August 2nd, this year, held at Arrowhead resort, near Spanish Fork, Utah.

## News From Utah

★

The young ladies and the members of the entertainment committee, are all descendants of the 16 original Icelandic pioneers who settled in the eastern part of Spanish Fork between 1855 and 1860, to found the first Icelandic settlement in America.

While the Icelandic settlement was a distinct group in the early days, it has now been thoroughly assimilated as an integral part of the thriving town.

From the days of the first settlement, the pioneers and their descendants have religiously observed their national holiday by a celebration at which all gathered and recalled incidents of other days.

The day-long program began with the registration of guests at 9 a.m., and concluded with a dance in the evening.

## The Icelandic Canadian

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Björnsson's Book Store, 702 Sargent Ave., Winnipeg.





ICELANDIC FLOAT, UTAH PIONEER DAY, JULY 24th

On July 24th, each year, Utah celebrates Pioneer Day, to commemorate the entry of the pioneers into the Great Salt Lake Valley. In view of the fact that the Icelandic settlers who arrived in 1855, came only 8 years later than the original group that founded the commonwealth, the committee in charge requested that an Icelandic float be included in the parade this year.

The float represents a Viking ship,

with a dragon head at the prow and Viking shields on the sides. Standing at the bow of the ship is Miss Norma Bearson, "Fjallkonan", with Rayona Leifson; they typify Icelandic Motherhood and Childhood. Others on the float are: Mary Jane Jarvis, Marlene McKell, Jane Johnson, Mary Alice Bullen, Laurel Argyle and Faye Fennessy. They are all third generation descendants of the original settlers. The parade was witnessed by 40,000 people.

## Dyes Are Important



Dyeing is an ancient industry. The Chinese, Persians and Indians used natural dyes (that is dyes obtained from plants), many centuries ago. Indigo is probably one of the oldest dyes known, and Tyrian purple from a species of snail, is another. The Egyptians knew how to produce very brilliant colours, and the Italians were renowned in the

13th and 14th centuries for their skill and taste in dyeing.

Until the 19th century only natural dyes were used but since then the use of synthetic dyes (the majority of which are prepared from coal tar) has been developed into an art, although the old natural dyes are still preferred for work of high artistic value.

## *Five Cents A Cup*

By CAROLINE GUNNARSSON

★

Madam Mystic's sturdy feet carried her briskly toward the little restaurant through the drizzling rain, before the threatened downpour could catch up with her. Inside the door warm air gushed through the grate, caressed her chilled ankles and stole slowly over her whole body. She nodded casually to Bill Mason, the proprietor, at the cash register, then went on to the cloak room.

This would be a busy afternoon. It was one of those dull, dreary days when spring sulks coldly in mid-air; when people's troubles tighten around them and they drift listlessly into cheerful little gypsy tea rooms. Madam Mystic could never quite decide whether they came for the sake of huddling together or to draw hope from the things she read in their tea leaves. Anyway, tea cup reading was a great help to those who had faith in it.

In the cloak room she ran into Harriet, the pretty little blonde waitress, gazing intently into the mirror of her compact and carefully dabbing powder around her eyes.

"Hello, Harriet," she said lightly. "Miserable day."

"Yeah." Then hesitantly, "Listen - think you might get a chance to read my cup today?"

"Of course, child. I'll make a chance. Meet me at the little corner table after Six. I'll do it before I go home."

Madam Mystic was disturbed. Nothing should be allowed to irritate that tender heart of Harriet's. Something would have to be done. She remembered herself as a young girl, leaning eagerly toward a fortune teller in a quaint little tea room. Suddenly her biggest wish had seemed too precious to trust to a tea cup, so she quickly withdrew it and substituted a lesser one. Yet every word spoken by that wizardly old woman across the table from her had seemed

to interpret her hidden wish and its happy realization. How her heart had echoed that comforting reassurance.

She hustled to a table and sat down beside a young girl. Picking up her cup and shaking it dry, she looked toward the door. Two middle aged women were entering.

In their flat-heeled black oxfords and cotton stockings that wrinkled slightly around the ankles they walked heavily to a table. One stout figure was rigidly corseted and neatly dressed in black. Its owner tucked a few stray hairs of gray under her shabby hat and sat down. Her companion wore a flowered dress. She bulged where she would and straying hairs were left to stray. "Not much rain on their coats," thought Madam Mystic. "Live in a boarding house close by likely. Seems to be plenty on their minds, and one of them can't take it. She's letting herself go."

As she prattled gaily to the girl beside her, she felt her thoughts drawn toward the older women, who craned their necks eagerly toward her voice.

"Wonder if she's any good," said the one in the flowered dress.

"Good as most of them I guess," answered her friend, tapping the table with a gold-banded finger that was obviously on good terms with strong, hot soap suds.

Harriet brought their tea on a tray. She was a pretty child. Madam Mystic saw Bill Mason's eyes soften and rest with pleading warmth on her small, quick hands as they emptied the tray.

Madam Mystic moved from table to table, stopping now and then for a word with the waitresses. The two elderly ladies had tipped their cups.

"Ethel has the children," remarked the lady in black.

The other woman toyed listlessly with a spoon. "Oh, sure," she said bitterly.

"She got a dirty deal." She glanced at Madam Mystic with mingled awe and expectation, then said to her friend, "Do you want to have your cup read?"

"I'm not fussy." They moved slightly as if to leave but Madam Mystic floated casually toward them.

She sat beside the lady in the flowered dress. "Did you make a wish?" she asked briskly, picking up her cup. "You've been sort of discouraged lately," she continued in a puzzled tone - - - "worried about someone near to you . . . a woman - - your daughter, I would say." She could feel the woman's intent gaze upon her and went on. "The cup shows me children around her. But her husband - - he isn't with her, is he?"

"Her husband," the woman blurted out. "He had a wife when he married her."

"I see," said Madam Mystic sagely. "The cup shows me betrayal in the past. But the future looks bright. She has been offered a position," she hazarded. The woman nodded. "She should take it," went on Madam Mystic. "I see the key of opportunity and a road to new romance in the future. You should look after the children for her. You're afraid to take things upon yourself. You're the kind of person that worries about tomorrow, but never gets around to doing things today. If you don't take this chance to help your daughter, you'll always regret it."

She reached across the table and took the other woman's cup smiling quietly into tired responsive eyes.

"There isn't much in your cup but hard work," she said. "You always manage better than other people with what you have. One thing, though, you're apt to do more for other people than they do for you."

She rose and left them. As she moved toward the next table she heard the lady in the flowered dress say to her friend: "Ain't she good, Mary? Ain't she

good? Everything she told me about Ethel was true, and about me too. Guess I should look after the kids alright."

"Of course you should; I've been telling you that all the time," said Mary.

"Five cents a cup," thought Madam Mystic as she trudged wearily toward the small table at the far corner at six o'clock, "I've done pretty well today."

Harriet was waiting for her, pensively gazing at an empty cup, tipped for reading, but for Madam Mystic she had set a plate heaped high with hot meat and vegetables.

Madam Mystic sat down heavily and heaved a sigh. She picked up Harriet's cup before touching the food.

"Are you in love, Harriet?" she asked with a thrill of surprise in her voice. Harriet colored, but didn't raise her eyes. "My dear, your love is certainly returned. He is feeling just as blue as you are. There seems to have been a misunderstanding, but the slightest move on your part will clear it up. I see an invitation for you. Don't turn it down. I also see a surprise for you and a ring. Do you know?" she continued with slow deliberation. "The man seems to be close to you, as if he were always with you - - all day long like."

"Thanks so much," said Harriet huskily, as Madam Mystic put down the cup and began to eat leisurely, trying to count the nickles she had earned during the afternoon. But she was too tired - - too tired. Bill Mason would probably not pay her before the end of the week anyway.

Dragging her tired body through the drizzling rain, she wished forlornly that she could go straight home instead of to her cleaning job in the office building across the street. But she had better not give up that work until she felt sure that this job in the tea room was steady. If she only knew.

Could she afford to have her cup read after she finished her chores.

## *Icelandic Pioneers of 1874*

From the Reminiscences of Simon Simonson

Translated by W. KRISTJANSON

---

On the tenth of September, 1874, at half past one o'clock, the ship moved down the fjord. The wind blew from the north and there was a rough sea, with flying spray. Outside Drangey, the view was dimmed and the seas ran high. Everybody was sea-sick. Early the following morning we could barely glimpse the West Country mountains and they soon disappeared altogether from view. This was on the eleventh, a Friday. Then a direct course was set for Quebec, where we arrived, safe and sound, on Wednesday the twenty-third, although two of the days at sea had been very bad. The ship's speed varied from seventy-five to 265 miles a day. The distance to the St. Lawrence River was 2194 miles.

After a considerable wait, we proceeded to the Immigration shed. Sigtryggur Jónasson met us there, and immediately assumed the role of guide and interpreter. This gave the people a momentary uplift of the spirit.

That night we moved into the coaches, which the majority thought a considerable novelty, so very different from anything at home. We proceeded to Montreal, where we had a meal, and then went on to Toronto. On the evening of the twenty-fourth we moved into the Immigration shed. We had a long stay there. Our fare was good; at least, there was sufficient beef, but it proved unsuitable food, being too heavy, and the people generally became considerably indisposed, especially the children. However, during all this long journey our family was in good health.

A few of the girls in the group went into domestic service in Toronto.

In Toronto we met with some Icelanders who had arrived the previous year, including Friðjón and his wife, and Baldvin. These visited us on occasion, in the evenings.

Presently we learned that we were to move into a district to the north in the province, where a railroad was under construction. There we would be able to support ourselves and our families. During our stay in Toronto, buildings were being erected for our use at a point along the proposed route of the railway.

We left Toronto at night. We had to proceed on foot through the city for about three miles, and carry our luggage. I carried my little Guðrún, but my Guðmundur walked. I thought the buildings so high and the streets so narrow that the street was like a narrow ravine at home in Iceland, but the travelling was different, for the streets were paved with stone. We arrived at the railroad station about day-break.

The railroad ran north, about eighty miles, to Coboconk, where we had our midday meal, at three o'clock.

The town was newly built. The landscape there was becoming much more unattractive and more stony.

October 9, 1874. Before us lay a journey of fourteen miles, by horse-drawn wagons, over stones and brambles and wet ground. That was a trying journey for the children, who were sick or ailing, and for the women. The jolting of the clumsy wagons on the rough road was fearful. Also, the season had been wet, and nights came on pitch dark. Anybody with sense would have known the effects of this journey would be anything but good, and such proved to be the case. Many of the children collapsed, and also some of the grown-ups, chiefly the old folks.

About midnight the people were dumped out of the wagons, under the trees, in darkness such as I have scarcely seen the like. We knew not where to go, and had the sick children on our hands. At last, after a long and distressing



wait, with the people milling about in the mud, two of our countrymen came, bringing a faint light, and directed us to a hovel which was under construction, and at the building of which a few Icelanders had worked.

Tired and hungry, we arrived at these miserable quarters. There was some food on the table, but only the strongest secured this, while the weak and the sick received nothing. Each thought of self, and of no one else. I could not bring myself to act like a wild beast.

The following day the people were allocated to the newly built huts, which were numbered, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. There was considerable space between them. Our family, and eight others, were assigned to number four hut. It will be left to the imagination what the atmosphere was like inside.

The houses were built thus: the walls and gable ends of logs, and the roof of boards. The beds were one above the other, with end to the wall. It was scarcely possible to sit upright in the side-beds. Such illness prevailed in these huts that the poor children were stricken wholesale.

Sigtryggur's plan was to have a communal table, with all alike sharing expenses. This system, however, did not last. There were those who tried to cook and did not do so well, and there were those who pilfered supplies. . . I do not care to describe it now, after twenty years; this was an unhappy period of my life. Also, we had to wait for our bed-comforters several days. All this was hard on the children, who were continuously taking ill. As for the men, they were unused to the work, and all were ignorant of the language. Most bitter of all, for me, it was to see my little Guðrún suffering intensely and to be unable to ease her suffering. She kept nothing down. There was little milk to be had and what little there was, was not good. About nine days from the time Guðrún became ill, God took her to himself, in his merciful embrace. She died at ten o'clock in the evening of Satur-

day, the eighteenth of October. Jón Iváson made the coffin. She was buried on the twentieth, in Kinmount cemetery. Jón and Jakob Espolin dug the grave and were pall-bearers. Guðrún was a lovely and pleasant child, well developed for her years, and appeared to be endowed with good intelligence, I shall mourn the loss of my loved one as long as I live.

The weather was extremely hot and it was often with a most painful effort that I kept at work, but I forced myself to do so.

The pay was one dollar a day, till the New Year, and ninety cents thereafter. It appears that I worked thirteen days in October; 19¼ days in November; twenty-four days in December; 16½ days in January; 14½ days in February; and twelve days in March. During that period I earned \$95.45.

At first the foremen were exceedingly harsh with us, but towards the last they were very well disposed, and preferred to have only Icelanders in their employment, and gave us the best of reports. I worked for a considerable time for one employer, and a short while for two others, until all work ceased for lack of funds.

Sigtryggur and Friðjón set up a store in Kinmount for us Icelanders.

The surrounding country was not at all pretty and it was difficult to cultivate. It was hilly, cut with gullies, stony, and wooded, and it was very sparsely settled. Throughout the district, farm wages were exceedingly low.

We suffered no real mishap during the winter, apart from the grievous infant mortality. Upwards of thirty children must have died, and also upwards of ten grown-ups, chiefly old people. It was a sad time for the bereaved among us.

Jóhannes Arngrímsson came from Nova Scotia, on behalf of the government of that province, to induce people to settle there. Some of our group who had taken land north of Kinmount, but had abandoned the undertaking, decided to go east with Jóhannes. The party

proceeded to Halifax, and then on to the lands selected for them. There they struggled to establish themselves in an unproductive country until 1881, when they moved to Manitoba and N. Dakota.

To return to Kinmount, Valdís and I obtained work a short distance from town, she in domestic service. I paid for my board. This employment lasted a month. We then returned to Kinmount, on the fourth of November, and remained there till Good Friday, 1875.

A few families now decided to pull stakes and move to Lindsay. We bought two teams, and set out on a journey that was not comfortable, for we were perched on top of trunks and chests and a general litter of luggage. The distance would be about fifty miles or more. However, the road, which was through woods, was well travelled.

We paused at noon, and arrived quite late in Lindsay, at the house where we were to lodge for the night, a cold, tumble-down shack. We stayed there three or four nights, and were required to pay for our lodging. Then we obtained a room at a hotel, owned by a Mr. Bell. Mr. and Mrs. Bell were a very elderly couple, and their grown-up children, two sons and two daughters, for the most part managed the place.

The preceding fall, a few Icelandic girls had gone into domestic service in Lindsay and we derived considerable pleasure from their company.

After a week or two, some seven families and a certain number of single men left for Halifax. I would have gone East if I had not lacked the money. As it was we had to content ourselves with staying that summer where we were.

As a matter of fact, we fared rather well, even if we made little money. Wages were exceedingly low, from .50¢ to a dollar for whatever arduous toil there might be, but many things were rather cheap, except flour and clothes. The work was chiefly at saw-mills, digging gardens, and heavy farm work. Frimann Bjarnason and Kristján Jónsson worked at mills on and off that sum-

mer. They had acquired quite good command of the language.

The town, which was small, was rather pretty. A river ran through it. Drawbridges permitted steamboats to ply back and forth on the river. There were several sawmills. Perhaps four of these were destroyed by fire during that summer.

Our room was in the attic, over a large hall. Service was held in the hall twice every Sunday, and there was frequently singing and playing at other times. The door of our room overlooked the street. This was often unpleasant, not the least when somebody was ill. On one occasion both K. J. and my son Guðmundur were down with the measles at the same time. This was not pleasant, for the room was very small. There was no hospital in Lindsay at that time.

The work which I first obtained was hauling logs to the saw-mill, and clearing away from the saw. This work was hard, and the employment uncertain. I also worked on a farm, six miles out, and did not like it there. Consequently, I did not complete my time and was done out of my pay, small as it was — fifty cents a day.

That spring was considerably more pleasant for us. There were a few Icelandic girls in the town and it was their custom to foregather at our little dwelling place.

That summer Helgi Jónsson came from Iceland. He made his abode with us, and when we left he remained in our lodgings.

My boss from the previous winter offered me work far to the west in the province, stating that some Icelanders were employed there. I agreed to go, and we left towards evening. On arrival at our destination, I was directed to a fine hotel. I did not sleep that night, for I discovered that I had not been told the truth. In the morning I started back, for I feared that I would be defrauded of my pay. I walked fast to the vicinity of Uthall and then took the train to Lindsay, paying 75¢ for my fare. I was dead-tired, after walking all day along the

railroad, hungry and a little poorer than when I set out.

That same summer, five delegates, Sigtryggur, Kristján, Skapti, and two others, proceeded out West, to Manitoba, to prospect for land for the settlement of our people. They selected New Iceland, territory that has not proved up to expectations.

Some of the delegates returned, and the people, who had scattered to various parts of Ontario, were assembled at one point.

Many were loathe to venture such a great distance. Indeed we were rather well situated in Lindsay. The people were good to us, and often helpful, but there was little work and the pay was low, and future prospects poor.

On the twenty-first of September, late in the day, we set out from Lindsay. The people there much regretted our leaving, especially the owners of the room in which we had lived during the summer. No doubt this was partly because most of the young women left with us. Some had already gone.

We proceeded by train to Toronto, where we remained a few days, awaiting the assembly of others of our scattered countrymen. There is nothing of note to report from Toronto, except that the English people thought that we had made progress during our absence and that we had improved in appearance.

From Toronto we left by rail, about noon, on the twenty-fifth of September, 1875. On the way to Sarnia, a distance of about 250-60 miles, there were beautiful towns and attractive settlements.

At Sarnia we stopped overnight. Everything was extraordinarily expensive there, accommodation for one person cost a dollar, even if there were three to share it. This was more than I was accustomed to pay at hotels.

From Sarnia we set out by steamer on the following day. When cargo goods, luggage, and other litter had been stacked on board, and a quantity of livestock, including horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, and poultry had been squeezed in, our turn came and we were packed like sardines

on top of the luggage. No one was permitted to leave his place, so we were compelled to sit there and endure the stench of the livestock. The boat was so small and so unstable that two of the crew were continuously on the go with two sand-barrels, rolling them against the list. The owners' purpose was obviously to make as much profit as possible, and they gave no thought to the passengers' comfort. Who would believe that these conditions could have been tolerated! In addition, we met with rough weather, and all this we had to suffer for the duration of the voyage to Duluth, which lasted almost five days.

Duluth proved to be a very small place, comparable to a small trading village in Iceland.

The journey was resumed by rail, across Minnesota to the Red River, at Fisher Landing. We were now well-rid of the pigs, with their stench. The landscape was in many places rather ugly, with rocky ravines, ruined houses, sand-hills and stony heights. There was not much of forest.

On our way west we changed trains and we had a lengthy wait. We were packed overnight into a tumble-down smithy. The food was of poor quality and unpalatable. Furthermore, the system of serving, or the lack of it, was unpardonable; there was a rush for the victuals and each grabbed what he was able to reach. In the van of the stampede were the single men, who had only their own stomach to think of, which most of them did faithfully. Others, who wished to retain the manners of civilization, obtained very little, and were forced to go hungry. There was also the fact that those who had wives and children to look after were not always able to be on hand when food was distributed. There was much comment on the greedy behaviour of the offenders, on a journey that was sufficiently taxing in itself, especially for frail old persons, and the women and the children. No one looked to the needs of the people. Those who stood closest to Taylor, and were able to express themselves in the English lang-

uage, looked to their own comfort. The evening before our departure from Toronto, Sigtryggur had parted company with us, to proceed to Iceland as government immigration agent. Friðjón was now chief assistant to Taylor, but Friðjón was young and inexperienced.

We reached the Red River late in the afternoon. The weather was extremely wet and the ground was mud. Here was the end of steel, and a town was forming, and the livery stable and even most of the homes were tents.

Then began the process of packing the people into boats, which were flatboats, steamer-towed. That is, the majority were allocated to the flatboats; the elect were given room on board the steamer. Those on the boats had no place except on top of the mass of goods and luggage, and were without cover. Thus we travelled for several days, for there were many stops for the purpose of unloading goods and taking on board wood for the boilers. To make matters worse, the river had become so shallow, that the steamer grounded frequently, and it was often re-floated with difficulty. This meant much wading and our journey was slow and laborious. When assistance was required, many of our company made themselves scarce, not least the single men.

Towards evening we landed at the junction of the Assiniboine, south of the Hudson's Bay Company buildings. That same night, and on the following day, a few of our number unloaded the boats, although we were not in the best of condition for the work. The pay, however, which was three dollars, made up for that. To this much, for such a short time, we were not accustomed.

We were taken to the Immigration shed, which was not large, or in any way a remarkable building. There we were quartered for the few remaining nights until the seventeenth of October, 1875, when the journey was resumed.

Winnipeg was then a very insignificant little town, with few noteworthy buildings. I saw, in passing, one brick building, not pretentious; two brick-

faced buildings, not well constructed; three or four hotels, and many log houses. The Hudson's Bay Company had most of the trade. Grasshoppers had destroyed all cultivation for three years past, so that it was necessary to bring in all supplies for the few souls who maintained themselves there, and were nearing the end of their tether.

The delay in Winnipeg was for preparing the so-called boats for the journey. These flatboats could not be rowed and were subject to little control. They drifted at the mercy of the current, regardless of whether it meant life or death. Indeed, the more prudent in our company did not view this means of transportation with much favor, and predicted that all would be lost.

Nevertheless, the work of preparation was pushed, and the boats loaded. We had some supplies for our destination, for all our leaders were not so heedless as to rely on our subsisting entirely on the forest and the lake, even if there was an abundance of both.

The leaders' lack of forethought, as many realized afterwards, when too late, was almost incredible. The people suffered for years to come from the provident way in which preparations were made for the settlement. It was indeed a hazardous undertaking to move out into the wilderness, far from all settlement, and in the face of winter.

Several unattached young ladies stayed behind in Winnipeg, where they secured employment in domestic service. Some female children remained, too, and also a married couple, Björn Skagfjörð and his wife, because of the wife's illness. As for the main part of the group, these were required to proceed to the site of the proposed settlement, and to begin immediately on the work of cultivation; else they would have to pay the expenses of their journey out, and be left to fend for themselves, with no aid from the government loan.

Whether or not it is correct as stated by Guðlaugur Magnússon in his pioneering article in the Almanak of 1899,



that we left Winnipeg on the seventeenth,\* which was on a Sunday, at least it is not correct that we started early in the morning; we did not leave till about noon, or later. The number of the flatboats, as given, nine is probably correct. The tenth boat was a York boat. There the "better-class" people were given accommodation.

The current in the Red River is not swift, except after a sudden spring thaw, and in a rainy season, but the river is very winding and there are three rapids one worse than the other two. These rapids are sufficiently dangerous, even for serviceable craft in the hands of persons familiar with their navigation. What then of ourselves! Large stones and rocks left no margin of safety. Nevertheless, due to the marked energy of a few persons, including two guides who accompanied us to below the Rapids, about twelve miles from Winnipeg, the flotilla arrived safely at the mouth of the Red River on the twenty-first of October. On the same day the steamer Colville towed us on our way to Willow Point.

When the Colville was taking us in tow, its propeller damaged one of the flatboats, the one to which I had been allocated. The boat filled immediately, but all the goods were saved, although they were wet.

A stiff breeze blew from the south, and all the select folk moved on board the steamer, while the rest remained on the flatboats.

We were dropped by the Colville some distance off-shore. The captain, perhaps unduly cautious, would not risk moving in to the shallows. We were left in a difficult situation: one flatboat was water-logged and there was a considerable rise to the waves.

Our immediate objective was the inlet connecting the lake and the so-called Willow Tarn. We were aided a little by the breeze, which blew partly on our

quarter; otherwise we would not have succeeded in reaching our objective.

Every effort was now put forth, and we made our way inshore, on to the Willow Tarn, and along it, to the isthmus or gravel ridge. There we passed the night.

Then all the goods were lugged across the point, loaded on to the York boat, and taken to Gimli Bay. This was no small distance, and the task entailed several days of hard work.

Unequal was the effort put forth by the various members of the group. Some persons made themselves scarce, while others were unable to do anything because of indisposition, which in some cases may have been feigned. Some considered the work beneath their dignity. As a result, the task fell to the lot of comparatively few persons.

While we were moving the goods and supplies, we were troubled by exposure to wet.

The flatboats were broken up. The boards were intended for use in doors and door-frames; also for the floors in the homes of the leaders. It soon became evident that distinction was made between persons in the group.

No one possessed fishing nets, and our only means of shelter were some derelict tents, all ragged and torn, which Taylor had obtained on loan from the Hudson's Bay Company. These became our first habitation in our promised land, and into them we moved our cook-stoves.

It was difficult to move along the shore, on account of the fallen trees that reached out into the lake, so one had either to wade out into the water or to force one's way through the undergrowth with its fallen trees in order to travel from the landing places to the site of the settlement. This was especially difficult for those who had children as well as luggage.

There was no clearing in the woods where the ents had been set up, but, as a matter of fact, this was all to the good, for the tattered tents afforded very little protection, and one needed the shelter of the trees. The elect had the best tents;

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\* The daily Free Press refers to the party leaving on the sixteenth of October, 1875.—W. K.

John Taylor's tent was commodious, and the tents of his brother William and of some others in the group were fairly good, but many were less fortunate.

It snowed a little during the first night, and there was a light frost; frosts continued and grew more intense.

When the goods had been conveyed, by slow degrees, to our chosen location, now called Gimli, the building of the log-houses was begun. But at this time I took ill, and for two weeks I lay in my miserable quarters. I was sore from toil and exposure, and my condition was not improved by the unappetizing food. This illness caused a serious set-back to my work, for each person had enough to do, attending to his own.

Our family shared an old tent with Erlendur Olafsson and Ingibjörg and their son Andres, who was of an age with our Guðmundur. The two families were thus equal in numbers, but Erlendur had a little more money than I had.

When I was able to crawl out of bed, Erlendur and I turned our thoughts to building. It was in the first week of November that we began work. The other settlers had already laid claim to their lots, for indeed a large city was to arise on this little spot, and we were compelled to locate in the outskirts. We located to the south of the others, and knocked up a shack, about twelve feet square, and man-high, of rails which with difficulty we had managed to drag to the site. We topped the rafters with withered grass-rubbish from a low spot nearby, and plastered the chinks with clay. The door was in the middle of the east wall, with a half-size window on either side. There were two beds along each side-wall, made of rails that had been trimmed a little. The stove was in the centre. We thought this a delightful abode in comparison with our ragged tent.

We moved into our new home on Saturday, the ninth of November. My Valdis was then not well.

On the eighth of November a fairly large number of men started work for John Taylor, on the erection of a building

which was to be good-sized, warm, and in every respect well built. William Taylor, who had already constructed a shelter for himself, was the chief carpenter. The walls were double and very thick, and the space in between filled with clay. There was a ground floor and an upstairs. Altogether, the building, especially in comparison with the shacks of the others, was quite impressive.

This work lasted a good fortnight. The pay was \$1.25 a day, and was in kind through the government loan.

Pending the completion of the building, Taylor continued to live in his tent, despite snow and prevailing frosts.

As previously mentioned, cook-stoves were included with the necessities which we brought in with us. Erlendur and I joined in buying one. We made immediate payment almost in full, and then my funds were exhausted.

The provisions which we brought in with us included the following items: flour (not of good quality); potatoes (which froze); pemmican, and wheat. The wheat had to be ground in iron mills, a task both difficult and slow. As for the flour thus produced, the women found it unsuitable for bread-making, and, indeed, as made by some, the bread was not fit for human consumption. There was also some coffee, in half pound lots, and beans.

Our supplies were not greatly augmented by the fish which we were able to catch, for none of us possessed fishing tackle. Lacking too, on our part, was the necessary knowledge of how to go about lake-fishing. Nevertheless, we were able to catch a few.

Neither the townsite nor the surrounding country had been surveyed, so that the buildings that were erected had to be sited approximately. During the winter, however, the surveyors came, and surveyed both the townsite and the country around. The townsite, which was not a large one, was called Gimli.

Deaths were frequent among both grown-ups and children, but the casualties were proportionately greater among the children. It was a miracle that any-

one survived the hardships and the suffering to which we were subjected: hardships of travel; poor accommodation; food generally unsatisfactory and particularly so for the children and the ailing. Nor was there a doctor available in case of need. It was indeed rashness, thus to endanger the peoples' lives, and the people themselves lacked imagination in taking health precautions.

I mentioned previously that my Valdís had not been well, but I did not state the cause. On the twenty-ninth of November, 1875, about half past one, she gave birth to a boy. He was christened on the ninth of December and named Gunnlaugur. He was called away on the fifteenth of December, a fortnight old, and was buried on the following day. Valdís was then on her feet again, and as well as could be expected.

My Guðmundur and Andres cut wood for the stove, and managed well for their age. Erlendur and I often worked for others. Community life was passable. Thus time progressed, if slowly.

We had to make the most of our small supplies. I shall enumerate just as I wrote it at the time what I obtained for Christmas from the store that had been set up for distribution of supplies, in order to give an idea of with what little we had to content ourselves. To begin with, there was no white sugar, and brown sugar was not available till on the third day preceding Christmas. My list is: six pounds of brown sugar; two pounds of pemmican;  $5\frac{1}{4}$  pounds of wheat; one pound of currants; one pound of soda; three pounds of soda biscuits; one-half pound of coffee; two pounds of beans. From these purchases one and all can see that the men and women in the first years of the New Iceland settlement did not live in luxury.

Friðjón Friðriksson looked after the distribution and sale of supplies. The government advanced the money as a loan, and the lands were to be security. For this reason Taylor urged that we should move on the land as soon as possible.

We possessed no means of transport

and had to haul or carry things ourselves. Before the Advent season there were severe frosts, ranging as low as  $40^{\circ}$  below zero, or more, and the snowfall was heavy. There were no roads through the forest, and what with the deep snow and fallen trees, we found it scarcely possible, even when unencumbered, to travel, except on the lake. It was thus impossible for us to move on our lands in the depth of winter.

Those who were on the most intimate terms with Taylor acquired the best located lots, those in the townsite and to the south, along the waterfront. They went about this very quietly, before many knew what was happening. Thus they had things more convenient than those who had to carry all their necessities some distance inland, and over muddy and difficult trails. They had this in mind.

Supplies began to run low, and about the middle of December Taylor went to Winnipeg. Two sleigh-loads of supplies arrived at the end of the month, including twelve sacks of wheat, but these loads were small. The lake route was not yet feasible, fodder for the horses had to be carried and the freighting equipment was inadequate, there being no boxes on the sleighs, merely rails or planks. Deep snow made travelling difficult. This kind of freighting was expensive.

The following men took turns at carrying the mail: Sigurður Kristofersson, Kristjan Jonsson, Benedikt, and others. Very few in the settlement received any benefit from this mail service except John Taylor and his brother, William, for we were isolated in a strange land and few could read the English papers.

Occasionally, during the winter, Taylor held religious services, for he was a good and God-fearing man, despite what has been said about his lack of forethought.

During the winter, too, those who were most closely associated with Taylor sometimes gathered in his home. Otherwise there were, to my knowledge, no concerts that year.

Incidentally, Taylor's house, which had received such special attention, did not prove as well-constructed as was believed. When spring came, it developed a list and the roof leaked.

Between Christmas and the New Year we carried dry wood out on the lake, to build a huge pyre for the burning out of the Old Year.

On New Year's Eve the night was still and extremely frosty. The fire was lit and as soon as the blaze gave sufficient warmth, men and women, as many as were able to, thronged on the scene. Everybody enjoyed himself greatly. William Taylor, who was then about sixty years of age, was dressed to impersonate the Old Year. He was a sight to behold in his apparel. He wore a tarpaper hat, two feet high or better, a beard of hair of rabbit fur, and a white smock so voluminous as to make him seem a giant. He had a walking stick and carried a bottle and a wine glass. The latter he passed around freely, but there was a rub: the bottle was empty. He was very witty and his entertainment was good. Finally he was carried away and he disappeared from the story. Then the twelve New Year's sprites appeared on the scene, clad in white and decked with rose-red ribbons. They acted in their various comic scenes. Then the people returned to their homes, thinking the entertainment a success. None had far to go, and there was plenty of wood for heating the shacks, which was all to the good, for the frost was very severe.

After this the men began generally to build on their lands, which they had selected, mostly on sight unseen. Some of these lands were miles away, and the snow was very deep. I think that no one had the least idea what he was doing, not even the leaders, except for the one purpose in mind: to settle along the lake.

As for the worth of the land, there was no thought given to that. All could see that the land was wooded, but no one thought about the quality of the soil, or about the mud. Indeed, the soil proved rather poor.

The houses were built on snow, located

in many instances where they should not have been, and they were but roughly constructed. The majority were keen to get on their lands as soon as possible, and set about clearing the forest, so that there might be seeding in the spring. Meanwhile, Taylor continued with his urging.

Those who secured the lake front lots were the best off. Their lands were more accessible and comparatively dry. It was thus easier to move about on them. Also, they were conveniently located for fishing.

I was unlucky and was not able to secure land less than a mile or 1½ miles from a landing place. As yet we did not possess the boats, but certain tub-like craft materialized the following summer. Also, we acquired some fishing nets. My land was fully six miles south of Gimli, up from Skapti Arason and Indriði. Erlendur Olafsson was nearer the lake.

Our choice of lands was not of the best, as may be expected, since no one knew how to appraise them, and, furthermore, they were covered with snow. Our farms were difficult to reach, and the buildings on them were not erected without painful effort.

Of course, we cooperated with each other in the building of our homes, but what trudging there was, and what toil there was, straining to move the logs and all our other necessities! Also, the food was insufficient and not of the best.

Valdís, although not at all well, undertook a journey to Winnipeg on February the twenty-sixth, to obtain work. She travelled on one of the flat-bottom sleds used for freighting goods. With her went Kristbjörg Sigurbjörnsdóttir, then a young girl. They both gave an unfavorable account of their journey, what with the cold and the character of their overnight accommodation.

I took ill on the sixteenth of March and was confined to my bed for a few days. What little nursing was possible, Ingibjörg, Erlendur's wife gave me.

A letter arrived from Valdís on the nineteenth. She had then obtained work in domestic service.



The time had now come for us to move on our lands, or, to be more precise, for lands which we hoped would be ours, for in many cases full possession was never acquired. Erlendur and I had built a house together, for we owned the cook-stove in common, and Ingibjörg prepared the meals for me and my Guðmundur. We moved in on the first of April, or shortly after. The weather was cold and the snow still lay heavy on the ground. Because of this, and because of our lack of the requisite equipment, the move was accomplished only with difficulty. Of course, it was possible for the sleds to travel on the lake, but they were so heavy, being made of green wood, and so poorly constructed that all that one person could do was to pull them empty.

Many small sleds had also been built, and at this time almost every person seen on the move had a sled in tow or a pack on his back.

About the tenth of April, I began the building of my house, with four men to help. I had already cut the logs required, and the work of building took two days.

The snow had subsided but little, and fresh snow fell at the beginning of May, and frosts continued until June. On the ninth of May there was a thunder-storm, with an extremely heavy downpour of rain. We were unable to keep a stitch dry in the clayey leakage of Skapti's newly plastered house. The rain commenced about bed-time, and we stood nearly knee-deep in water for most of the night. We were unable to protect our bed-clothes from the rain, and they were soaked. Such was the comfort of most of the homes at that time, and this state of affairs continued for some years to come, in a number of cases.

Then commenced the seeding of beans and potatoes. It was rather difficult work clearing the forest and burning the trees, for the ground was very wet. Hoeing was difficult, too, for the ground was a solid tangle of roots.

The yield was small, and in addition there were a great many destructive small creatures to spoil the crop.

About the middle of June the potatoes

were planted. It had not been possible to bring the seed in before, as the ice remained on the lake till the twenty-fourth of May.

After the middle of June, Mundi and I went to Winnipeg. My Valdís was then employed at a boarding-house. She was not happily situated, for the work was too hard. In addition to that, she was defrauded of a goodly portion of the wages promised her, which was in keeping with what often happened during those first years.

Then we set up a tent and took in boarders, but the undertaking was not profitable; consequently I obtained work in connection with a large ditch which was then under way along Main Street. The work was exceedingly hard and we were driven relentlessly, so that only the strong could stand it. Later I worked for Taylor at making flat-boats for the party of Icelanders whose arrival from the homeland was then anticipated. The wages were not high, and nowhere else were they high, but generally they were better for women in domestic service than elsewhere — for at that time there was little prosperity in the land.

On the eighth of August, Sigtryggur arrived in Winnipeg, with the first group of Icelanders to arrive that summer, numbering upwards of 750. Later, on the fifteenth of the month, Halldór Briem arrived with nearly 450. I mention the names of these two for they were the conductors of the groups. It may well be imagined that we who had been away from home for two years, and not in the best of circumstances, welcomed this addition to our group.

The new-comers were not much better off on their arrival than we had been when we first came to this part of the country, except for the fact that summer was not far advanced when they came. Their group was much larger, and their baggage many times greater than ours, but they had to rely on the same inadequate means of transportation. They were complete strangers to the manner of life and the methods of work, which differed totally in the Old Country. Many

were ill from the effects of their long journey, which they had made without a break, travelling by way of England, while we proceeded direct to Quebec.

I rough-built a boat and purchased various articles, including a gun, a stove (which had been used, but was strong, and which we kept seventeen or eighteen years and was afterwards used by my brother Jónas); a saw, and various other articles. I also bought two young pigs, but both died, for they did not thrive on their diet of fish.

The second group left on the twentieth of August. We three, in our tub-boat, followed a few days after, and caught up with the party at the mouth of the Red River. We had been favored with good weather that far, but at this point we were caught in a thunderstorm and the rain came down so heavily that I could scarcely keep up with the bailing. Nevertheless, I considered our small craft vastly superior to our boxes of the year previous, for I was able to steer it.

Towards evening of the following day we passed the Gimli party. Crowded in their boxes, or flat-boats, they looked most uncomfortable. All the other lake-craft had already proceeded north.

I had a brief conversation with the people, and then pursued my course to the west, along the sandy beaches. It began to blow from the north and I was compelled to seek shelter of the woods along the shore.

We put up for the night, and had a bad time of it, as on many another night, because of the flies and the wet. After another day's journey we arrived at Erlendur's place.

During the ensuing period, it rained often, so that the people who had not yet shelter suffered considerable discomfort.

I finished the roof on my house, and moved in about the twenty-third of September. I named the place Skógar (Woods). It was rightly named for the land was for the most part heavily wooded. The site on which the house was built proved rather wet, and the

house itself was never free from leakage.

The settlement began to grow up around us, two Johns to the south, one to the west, and other settlers as well. To the north was the school-section. All the settlers gave their farmsteads Icelandic names.

Jón, who called his place Laufás, proved an excellent neighbor. He was one of the best to do of the party on arrival, but he suffered heavy losses; his house burned down and he met with other mishaps. In addition, he had many to support. Thus, much of his substance filtered away. As a matter of fact, I relinquished my pre-emption in his favor.

Conditions were appreciably better in our part of the settlement during the second winter. I was able to get some supplies, including four bags of flour, and we were able to do a considerable amount of fishing. Elsewhere the small-pox raged, and many suffered, but the plague did not hit us hard.

Near the beginning of November, two flat-boats were stranded along the shore; one loaded with potatoes, the other with a variety of supplies, including flour. Consequently, we had mainly frozen and spoiled potatoes that winter, for the potato crop that summer had been rather small.

There was no milk, but we now had got on to the way of catching rabbits. I also, I shot some ducks. We did not go hungry, but the food was not always inviting.

Now the task at hand was to cut boards with a cross-cut saw, an article which was possessed by few, and to clear the forest. Tending the nets took much time, especially for the single-handed. Then there was the interminable carrying, which played out completely those far from the lake, but was comparatively easy for those located near it. The lake continued to be the chief source of our food supply.

The winters were much more pleasant than the summers, because in the summertime all roads were impassable, and the fierce swarm of flies was scarce.

ely endurable. The first two winters were hard, but the winter of 1877-'78 was exceptionally good.

I caught a goodly supply of fish every winter, after the first, when I did not catch many. Sometimes I fished directly off-shore; sometimes at the mouth of the Red River, and occasionally up north, at Big Island. I had to be my own beast of burden to haul the catch, and this was arduous on such distances.

Towards the end of July, 1877, the cows arrived, 250 of them. They were brought from Minnesota, no trifling distance. We were required to meet the herd and to assist driving it through the woods. We had been without milk for two years and I was not loathe to help. Our journey took three days, for the road was bad. By the time we got through to Willow Point, we were considerably fatigued.

The cows were allotted at Willow Point. The men were separated into groups according to their number of children, or according to the difficulty of their circumstances, but mostly on the former basis. Then each in turn was allowed to select one cow. I was in the fourth or fifth group and when it came to our turn much more than half the herd was gone. At this point I did not like the look of things. All the cows which I had fancied and had a drop of milk in them, were gone. I was certainly feeling badly about it when I spied a broken-tailed five or seven year old, of a good average size. She was red on the flanks; had rather fine horns, and a white star on her forehead. The flaw was that she was virtually dry and gave a mere cupful on arrival at home. However, her yield increased and went up to three pints, and the good creature became one of my staunchest household pillars. She was beautiful in appearance, docile, and sagacious. We called her Búbót, (freely, Bountiful).

Late in the following month of August, Jón of Laufas loaned to me the price of a cow which I purchased from Skapti. She cost thirty dollars, but proved sterile, so we slaughtered her

and sold half the carcass to Magnús and Rósa.

Haymaking was difficult. Only small natural openings here and there in the forest were fit for cutting, and there the grass was full of sticks and other rubbish, and the ground was wet. The hay had to be carried on forks, or on barrows, carried by two persons. It was stacked in hummocks, on the spot, and then brought in during the winter. It was not possible in my case to use horses or oxen, even if I had possessed them, which I did not, but in some few places elsewhere the hayland was more accessible.

I did not bring my Bible or my **Passion Hymns** from home, and the first winter I was able to buy only Dr. Peturs' three books, which Sigfús bound, and the Old hymn book, and three lays. In addition, I subscribed to **Framfari** (Progress). This was all our provender for mind and spirit, but we were happier then than later, when we had acquired more.

On the twenty-first of August my Valdís went to Winnipeg for work, but her stay was short and on the twenty-eighth of September Arni Sveinsson and I left on our trip to bring her home.

The journey to the city took us a day and a night, the best time in which I ever made it. On the thirtieth, which was Sunday, we started for home. We stayed overnight at a point on the river a little below Monkman's place. The three of us slept in the boat and had a cowhide for cover. The weather had turned colder, but the wind did not blow through Arni's hide. On the following days we reached home.

During this period we had two cows, but their yield was small.

Life was different now, although we did not possess plenty. Indeed, we lacked many things. Our attempts at raising crops often failed, because of the host of destructive creatures in the woods. The potato crop was an exception. On one occasion I harvested about 150 (pailfuls?) of potatoes. I was not able to sell any of this crop, but we required a great

deal of potatoes to go with the fish, and potatoes served as fodder for the cow.

The soil was a tangle of roots down to clay and was difficult to cultivate with the one implement available, the hoe. One worked hard all day, with but little to show for it. The roads were impassable, so that draught animals were of little use. In any event, these were possessed by only a few, and their use was chiefly in winter.

In October of 1876, we took Guðrún Jóhannsdóttir from Jóhanna Thorbergsdóttir, who had a struggle to maintain her four children and an aged mother. She had lost her husband, and a very promising son, Paul. I have not made a note of how long we kept the girl. Also, in the spring of 1877, we took Guðrún Kristjánsdóttir and her child. They remained with us on into the following winter.

On the fourteenth of September, 1877, Lord Dufferin visited Gimli.

On Saturday, the sixteenth of March, 1878, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Valdís gave birth to a daughter. Rebecca Johnson was in attendance. The child was christened on Palm Sunday, by Reverend Jón Bjarnason, and named Jóhanna Guðrún.

The house at Laufás burned down at noon on March 30th. Two women were at home at the time, one of them with an infant, and virtually nothing was saved. In the circumstances, we tried to help, and Arni and Guðrún came to stay with us, with their son Jón, who was then in his first year. It did not take long to rebuild. The people were always good neighbors.

On the day of the fire at Laufás our Búbót calved. Her udder was extremely large, and her yield was rich.

Jón Magnússon and Jón Sigurjónsson possessed the farms immediately to the south of us. They were both poor, so that it was sometimes necessary to give them a portion of our meagre supplies. Erlendur and Ingibjörg, who lived nearer to the lake, were both frugal, and they prospered. Little Andres, their son, grew to manhood, and was married.

Skapti Arason and Indriði Indriðason, who owned lands by the lake, had good hayland. A narrow inlet ran up to Indriði's home, and I had a landing place there for my boat. Skapti was located a little farther to the south, on an inlet called Húsavík. Sometimes I drew my boat ashore there, but the distance was greater, which was a consideration when carrying things.

My last year in the settlement was the most difficult for obtaining háy. I owned little meadow-land and my pastures were in the woods, and they were insufficient to maintain a significant number of cattle.

Sometimes I alternated with Valdís in going to Winnipeg to earn money for necessities, but it was a long and a hard pull, and earnings remained small.

The people in the settlement had to rely on the outside world for many things, while neither fish nor any other local produce had an outside market. Trips to Winnipeg were numerous and the travelling was difficult.

The members of Reverend Jón Bjarnason's congregation abided the difficult conditions longer than did the followers of Reverend Paul Thorlaksson. It was the Reverend Paul who opened the eyes of the people to the miserable prospects in the country, while abundant good land was to be had elsewhere. Discontent took hold in the settlement and large numbers moved to North Dakota. Those who left, forfeited their cows and stoves and the other items furnished through the government loan.

In the summer of 1880 a few men went to look for land elsewhere in Manitoba. S. Kristofersson, Kristján Jónsson, W. Taylor, and S. Snædal formed one group; the Arnason brothers, Skapti Arason, Skúli, and Halldór, another. They walked all the way, proceeding south to Emerson, west to Pilot Mound, and then north to Argyle. They apparently took a shorter route on their return but all this walking must have been strenuous.

These men selected land for themselves and for others, and there followed the heaviest outward movement that



took place in the settlement, for the men mentioned were all prominent in the colony.

At the beginning of March, 1879, Valdís left for Winnipeg for work, travelling with Old Jón of Laufás. During his absence, I attended to his stock. This entailed two trips a day for me. On his return, Jón brought me a sack of flour as recompense for my work. This was most acceptable, for frequently one had to be very saving on flour.

When Valdís left, we placed our Guðrún with Sigríður, who lived a good mile away, to the north of Kristján Kernested. I had to take her milk over every day, and soon I began to tire of doing this. What I felt more keenly was that every time I took leave of the child, the tears would come to her eyes. After a month of this, I decided to take her home. Well do I remember how, on starting out with my burden in my arms I was at the same time both happy and unhappy: happy in having my little child with me (she was then a year old and quite promising) and unhappy because I could not hope to give her all the care she ought to have. I travelled south along the road with my burden in my arms, and then rested in the shade of an oak, for the day was hot. Then I cut straight through the woods, along an opening where I was wont to cut hay, and so home.

Things turned out better than I had expected. My boy and I took turns at minding Guðrún. Nevertheless, our task was often difficult. Although Guðmundur helped me all that could be expected, the burden of the work, inside and outside, fell on me. My neighbors offered to do the washing and the baking, but I soon discovered that to take things over and to call for them took more time than if I did the work myself. Then there was the gratuity to consider. Consequently, I undertook to do all the work myself.

About midsummer, I went to Winnipeg, to bring Valdís home. She had been working on a steamer plying to Brandon. While I was away, Ingibjörg, Erlendur's

wife, looked after things. Valdís had earned but little.

When I was in Winnipeg, there was an extremely violent thunderstorm, with a vivid display of lightning.

I found it difficult to secure sufficient hay for my few cattle. My fields were continually being overrun by cattle, who cropped the grass and cut up the ground.

That fall, Jón Magnússon and I set out for Winnipeg, travelling by road. Cold weather had set in, and the day was bright and frosty. By the time we reached Netley Creek, night was closing in. Indians only lived in that vicinity, but we decided to ask for lodging. This was refused, so we continued on our way.

A maze of ponds and runnels extended out from the river which made it difficult for strangers to keep direction. I was irritated by the refusal of lodging, and strode ahead recklessly. I had a good sized stave in my hand, secured from the woods, and we carried our packs on our backs. Suddenly, I found myself sinking through soft mush. I floundered on about the length of a house, and the mush began to thin out. Then I took a back-stroke to the edge where I had broken through. Meanwhile, Jón had lost his head completely and was shouting. I told him shouting was of no use since everybody was asleep; he should try to crawl to the edge and grab hold of my stick. This he succeeded in doing, but as he took hold I lost mine — then regained it. With God's grace, I succeeded in inching my way up on the ice, Jón crawling backwards until the ice was sufficiently strong to support the two of us.

Much can escape one's mind in a moment of panic. Jón had a long cord in his bag which he could so easily have thrown to me. As for me, I felt no fear while I was in; my mind simply turned to my little Gunna, with the thought that she was too young to loose me there in the water.

Then we returned to the house where previously we had been refused admission. Jón threw his weight about and said that we should force entrance, if nec-

essary. Certainly I was in no condition to proceed any farther. I felt stiff and my clothes had frozen so that I was scarcely able to walk. This time however, we were made welcome, and a good fire was started. Jón loaned me clothes until I had dried my own.

During my experience I had not felt fear, but at this point a strong reaction set in. I began to shiver, as if at death's door, and I did not sleep a wink that night. On the following day we continued on our way to Winnipeg.

The work which I was able to get was mainly at sawing wood. Employment was scarce, and wages low. We returned home before Christmas.

It was then that I commenced fishing at the mouth of the river, a practice which I continued during my years in the colony. I did not leave my nets to lie in the water without frequent inspection, for this practice caused nets to deteriorate quickly.

We had to make every effort to economize, but how patiently we endured our difficulties, toil, and privations. There was no expectation of comfort.

In the following spring, my Guðmundur, along with other children, was confirmed by the Reverend H. Briem.

During the last two summers I earned a considerable amount in Winnipeg. I worked at unloading boats, employment not deemed very genteel, and at building houses. At that time was begun the construction of the railway bridge and the erection of the large Hudson's Bay Company building, the Bank of Montreal, and many other fine buildings.

In March, 1881, we left New Iceland. We obtained an ox from Albert Thiðrikson, and also a rickety sleigh, on which we stowed all our belongings. There was a general shortage of hay that year, due to floods, and my small supply was spoiled by the wet. Consequently, I had a cow and a heifer in tow, in addition to my own cows, including Búbót, who had become lean. A beautiful red heifer calf I had been compelled to sell to Guðmundur Nord-

mann to obtain two dollars towards expenses on the way in. Actually, the price agreed on was four dollars, but Guðmundur was able to pay only half that sum.

In our group were Arni Sveinsson, Thordur, and myself. The journey to Winnipeg took two days.

We had no assured employment awaiting us in Winnipeg. Besides, I had to return the ox. Thus I found myself once again on the road to the settlement. In order to help to defray expenses, I transported goods for Friðjón. The round trip took five days, and all this time I was able to secure only snatches of sleep.

I left Skógar for my return journey late in the day. On the sleigh were loaded the chickens, cooped up in a cupboard, and odds and ends which I had previously left behind.

This time, also, I had to leave behind all my lumber, together with fifty to sixty well-squared logs which had cost me many an hour of work. There was a considerably large stock of the lumber, for it was my intention to build a large and well-constructed house. I had to leave, too, the house, with the attached shed and all the windows, as well as a number of implements. All this would be subject to depredations. It did not take long for abandoned houses to be cleared of all worthwhile articles left in them. Albert promised to bring me some of the things which I was compelled to leave behind, but this he failed to do. It was with a keen sense of poignancy that I left, close to night-fall pulling a sled, and travelling past many vacant and deserted houses.

It hastened my journey not a little that all my best friends had left, and also the fact that when I left my family in Winnipeg they had as yet not obtained accommodation.

West of Selkirk, what with fatigue from travel and lack of sleep, I threw myself on the frozen ground for a rest. My circumstances were reminiscent of the time when I left the Old Country. Then I had gone without sleep for three

days; now it was five, and my fatigue correspondingly greater.

I was fortunate that in the course of the day I caught up with a team, and obtained a little nest. Presently my fellow-traveller turned in at an hotel and I continued on my way. On parting, he treated me to a drink and this braced me up. That same day, in full daylight, I reached Winnipeg.

My Valdis had secured accommodation over a laundry, and had moved in. I was glad of the opportunity to rest.

Twenty-three years have passed, and since then I have not seen our old place.

At the time of writing, in 1904, my home is in Winnipeg.

#### TRANSLATOR'S CODA

Simon Simonson has told his story. It is obviously written without thought of publication; it is highly personal, and does not attempt to tell a comprehensive story of the settlement.

Since it is written from the autobiographical and not the broad historical point of view, other accounts of the time and place must be kept in mind in order to obtain a true final impression. The author is at times justly critical of the leaders. It should be borne in mind that at the time when the site of the settlement was chosen, it was proposed to build the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway through Selkirk, that among the few buildings erected in the fall of 1875 there was a school-house,

and that about the New Year Carrie Taylor was teaching a class of approximately twenty-five pupils; that despite the devastating small-pox epidemic of 1876-77, the settlers organized in February of 1877 a local government, and a formal and impressive constitution set forth clearly and concisely the duties of officials and made provision for collection of taxes, building of roads, sanitation, maintenance of records, and arbitration of disputes; that in 1878 **Framfari** had six hundred subscribers, three hundred in Canada and three hundred in Iceland. It should be noted here, too, that some members of the first group brought nets from Iceland, only the mesh proved too large for lake fishing.

Mrs. J. B. Skaptason, the author's daughter, places in a truer perspective the part played by the wives of the early settlers when she mentions that her mother assisted with the haying, on one occasion working in water up to mid-thigh.

Mrs. Skaptason states that when her parents moved to Winnipeg, the hard years were of the past. Her mother managed a boarding house, and during the first year in the city the combined earnings of husband and wife amounted to one thousand dollars.

This translation has been a labor of love and is a small tribute to the memory of the pioneers to whom we owe so much.

W. K.

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## Club News

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About 150 people heard the first lecture in this year's series of the Icelandic Canadian Evening School, given November 27th, in the First Lutheran Church.

The speaker, Mrs. O. Stephensen, was introduced by Mrs. H. F. Danielson, Director of the school. In her talk, entitled "Recollections From Pioneer Days in

Winnipeg", she gave some charming word pictures of life among the pioneers. She described the early landmarks and threw into relief the loyalty, courage and faith of the early settlers, which made astounding cultural developments possible, even at the start.

Slides were shown by Capt. W. Kristj-

anson, of scenes and personalities from the pioneer days, and the vivid commentary of Mrs. B. S. Benson further brought to life for the audience those interesting figures of the past. The younger people in attendance, were intrigued also by the quaint and elaborate costumes of the women and the bearded faces of the men.

The second lecture in the series will be given by Prof. Tryggvi Oleson on the "Pioneers of the Argyle District".

A brief business meeting preceded the lecture, conducted by the club president, Mr. Carl Hallson. A resolution was passed to establish a fund called "The Icelandic Canadian Club Scholarship Fund", out of which scholarships may be awarded to worthy students of Icelandic extraction. The club invites the general public to support this project, and contributions may be sent to Mr. Paul Bardal, Ste. 4, Bardal Block, Winnipeg. Contributions to funds of this nature are exempt from income tax. The establishing of this fund and its proper support by the general public, will no doubt have far-reaching results in furthering the cultural enterprises of our people of Icelandic descent.

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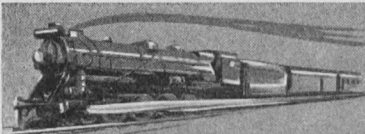
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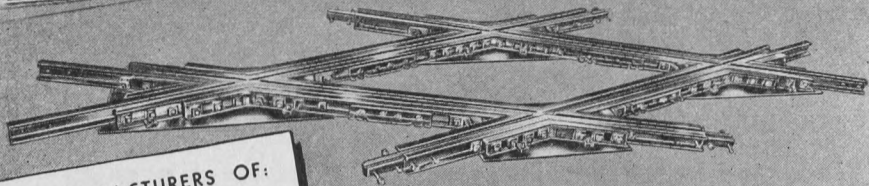
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- Stock carried of Rails 12 lb. to 100 lb., and all current sizes of Track Spikes and Track Bolts.

WE MANUFACTURE TRACK TURN-OUTS IN ALL  
RAIL SIZES FROM 12 POUND TO 100 POUND

*The* **MANITOBA BRIDGE & IRON  
WORKS, LIMITED**

*Head Office and Plant - WINNIPEG*



# SPEEF!

**The New  
Meat Treat**

**BY THE MAKERS OF 'Spork'**

*Watch for it at Your Food Store*

**30¢ a DOZ.**

FOR

**EMPTY BEER BOTTLES**

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YOUR EMPTY BEER BOTTLES  
WILL BE PICKED UP BY  
TRUCK AND REDEEMED AT  
30 CENTS PER DOZEN IF YOU  
WILL TELEPHONE DIRECT  
TO THE BREWERY.

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*Shea's*